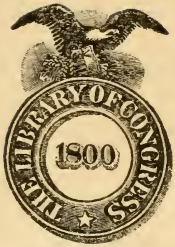

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A TRAMP

ACROSS THE CONTINENT

BY

CHARLES F. LUMMIS

AUTHOR OF "A NEW MEXICO DAVID," "STRANGE CORNERS OF OUR COUNTRY," ETC.

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1892

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To

CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER

THIS LITTLE INSTALMENT ON A

LARGE DEBT

PREFACE

I WOULD have this unpretentious book taken only for what it is — the wayside notes of a happy vagabondizing. It was written in hurried moments by the coal-oil lamps of country hotels, the tallow dips of section-house or ranch, the smoky pine-knots of the cowboy's or the hunter's cabin, the crackling *fogon* of a Mexican adobe, or the snapping greasewood of my lonely campfire upon the plains; and from that vagrant body and spirit I have not tried to over-civilize it. A prim chronicle of such a trip would be no chronicle at all. Nor have I desired to make it either an atlas or an encyclopædia of the country. Economic and geographic essays do not belong within its scope. It is merely a truthful record of some of the experiences and impressions of a walk across the continent — the diary of a man who got outside the fences of civilization and was glad of it. It is the simple story of joy on legs.

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A

TRAMP ACROSS THE CONTINENT

I

THE START AND THE REASONS

Good-bye to Malaria.—A Walk for Fun.—Amateur Robbers and the Great Professional.—Personally-Conducted Fishing.—The Beginnings of "Woolliness."—Joy on Legs.

But why tramp? Are there not railroads and Pullmans enough, that you must walk? That is what a great many of my friends said when they learned of my determination to travel from Ohio to California on foot; and very likely it is the question that will first come to your mind in reading of the longest walk for pure pleasure that is on record. But railroads and Pullmans were invented to help us hurry through life and miss most of the pleasure of it — and most of the profit, too, except of that jingling, only half-satisfying sort which can be footed up in the ledger. I was after neither time nor money, but life — not life in the pathetic meaning of the poor health-seeker, for I

was perfectly well and a trained athlete; but life in the truer, broader, sweeter sense, the exhilarant joy of living outside the sorry fences of society, living with a perfect body and a wakened mind, a life where brain and brawn and leg and lung all rejoice and grow alert together. I am an American and felt ashamed to know so little of my own country as I did, and as most Americans do. I was young (twenty-six) with educated muscles and full experience of the pleasures of long pedestrian tours — that is, such tours as are generally deemed long. Furthermore, I wished to remove from Ohio to California. So here was a chance to kill several birds with one stone; to learn more of the country and its people than railroad travel could ever teach; to have the physical joy which only the confirmed pedestrian knows; to have the mental awakening of new sights and experiences; and to get, in this enjoyable fashion, to my new home.

These were the motives which led me to undertake a walk of 3507 miles, occupying 143 days. There was no wager direct or indirect; no limitation to a specified time, nor any other restriction to make a slave of me and ruin the pleasure of the walk. It was purely "for fun" in a good sense; and the most productive four months of a rather stirring life. There was no desire for notoriety — indeed, I found it generally more comfortable to

tell no one on the way my object, and thus to avoid the stares and questions of strangers. The journey was often fatiguing, but never dull; full of hardship and spiced with frequent danger in its latter half, but always instructive, keenly interesting, and keenly enjoyed, even at its hardest, and it had some very hard sides. The first half need be but briefly outlined, for it was through a well-settled country with little adventure, and though interesting to me, was no more noteworthy than many other pedestrian trips in the East. But from Colorado westward it was an exciting series of adventures — far more of an experience than I had at all expected. If the narrative tells only of my own doings and impressions, you must remember that I tramped alone, so there is no one else to share the story — except the dog whose faithful chumship for 1500 adventurous miles, and whose awful death on the desert are still its most vivid memories. The tramp cost many times the amount of a first-class passage by rail; yet in view of the time covered by the expedition, the exuberant physical enjoyment, the rich store of information, the whole museum of curios and mementos, and above all the experience, it was very cheap. I have it to thank that later, when overwork had brought paralysis upon me, and lost me the use of my left arm, I came back to the wilderness to study

and live among the wonderful races and scenes I had found in walking across the continent, and there found, at last, perfect strength again.

I had tested Ohio for two years, with results more flattering to the climate than to me. The "ancient metropolis," former capital of the State — where the conductor of the old Marietta and Cincinnati Railroad used to bawl in at the car door "*Chillicothe! Fifteen minutes for quinine!*" — had approved itself as lovable in all other ways as it was meteorologically accursed. Its people are delightful, but its oldest inhabitant — and only bustling one — Dad Fevernager, quite the reverse. He never "shook" with me but once; but that was enough. And so it was that I moved.

On the 11th of September, 1884, I left Chillicothe by rail for Cincinnati, — that ninety miles being already an old story, — and from the latter city began next day my long walk. I wore a close, but not tight, knickerbocker suit, — one who has not learned the science of walking doesn't dream what an aggregate hampering there is in that two feet of flapping trousers below the knee, — with flannel shirt, and low, light Curtis & Wheeler shoes. People who do not walk all the time should wear thick-soled, heavy shoes for a tramp; but if one is to make a business of walking, the best way is to be as lightly shod as possible, and let the soles and

ankles toughen and strengthen without "crutches." Since learning to campaign in the Apache moccasin, I have always preferred a few days of sore feet and subsequent light-footedness to perpetual dragging of heavy shoes. My rifle went on by express to Wa Keeny, Kansas, where I was to shoulder it; and my small valise and light, but capacious duck knapsack made their daily marches on the broader shoulders of the express companies. The first rule of walking for pleasure is to walk light, and for that reason I had long ago discarded the bicycle for long trips. It is very pleasant to ride, but when you have to carry your "horse," which would be about half the time on such a journey, it is as bad as a ball and chain. Even a real horse would have made impossible many of my most interesting experiences, and I had cause to be thankful a thousand times that I was free from all such encumbrances. In my pockets were writing-material, fishing-tackle, matches, and tobacco, and a small revolver, which was discarded for a forty-four-calibre later on. A strong hunting-knife, the most useful of all tools, hung at my belt, and in a money-belt next my skin was buttoned $300 in $2.50 gold pieces, which would not suffer from perspiration as paper money would, and was of small denomination, as was necessary in a trip where the changing of a $20 piece would have cost my life in a hundred places.

It was nine o'clock Friday morning, September 12, when I turned my back on Cincinnati and trudged down the dusty "river road" toward Lawrenceburg. Along the valley of the broad Ohio the way was pleasant, and yet sad. The round hills, the wide "bottoms" rustling with yellow corn, the shimmering, peaceful river, — they were good to the eye. But everywhere among them were the broad, half-healed scars of a deadly wound — the cicatrices of the stupendous flood of February, 1884. Through all these towns and hamlets the treacherous river — between whose low-water and high-water marks is the appalling gulf of seventy feet — had written its grim autograph. Cincinnati was too big to be ruined, though the muddy sea covered many square miles of its area and stood a story deep in thousands of its buildings. But the little towns for three hundred miles have never recovered from that unprecedented avalanche of waters. Many of them will never fully recover, for they live in yearly dread of a new visitation.

It might be interesting to detail my experiences in trudging across the corner of Ohio, the whole length of Indiana and Illinois; but it would make this story too long, and it were better that the space be saved for the greater interest and excitement of the tramp in the farther West. The most prominent memory of the first week is — sore feet!

I had been walking a good deal for years before starting on the tramp; but the ground was burned up with drought, and the weather was still very hot; and walking all day, day after day, on that baking surface soon made my feet sore as one huge boil. But the experienced walker does not nurse such blisters. If you sit down and cure them, they come back as soon as you resume the march. If you will shut your teeth and trudge on, and bear the extreme pain for a few days, the rebellious soles gradually toughen into self-cure, and the cure is permanent throughout the journey. So I limped ahead, with very sorry grimaces and a sorrier gait, but without giving up, and by the time I stood in Missouri my feet were as happy as all the rest of my body. A sprain of my ankle just at starting cured itself in the same way.

The weather was hardly the best for walking. Across the first two States it was oppressively hot, and then I had several days of trudging in a pouring rain. However, it did not drench the spirits within, and it was welcome as an experience.

Crossing the noble bridge which wades, with giant legs of granite, across the Father of Waters at St. Louis, I followed the general course of the Missouri Pacific Railroad across Missouri, having some funny experiences with back-country people; and at last a bit of adventure a little west of War-

rensburg. From over the hedge of a cosy little farmhouse a huge and savage dog leaped in pursuit of me. He did not come to bark,—that was plain from the first,—but on business. He evidently liked strangers—and liked them *raw*. He did not pause to threaten or reconnoitre, but made a bee-line for me; and when close, made a savage leap straight at my throat. My hunting-knife chanced to be at my hand, and as he sprang I threw up a light switch in my left hand. He caught it in his big jaws; and in the same instant, with the instinct of a boxer, I gave a desperate "upper cut" with my hunting-knife. The strong, double-edged, eight-inch blade caught him squarely under the throat, and the point came out of his forehead, so fierce had been the blow. He never made a sound except a dying gurgle; and tugging out the bedded blade by a violent effort I hastened to depart, leaving him stretched in the road.

A couple of days later two cheap tramps of the ordinary sort "held me up" during one of my returns to the railroad. They were burly, greasy fellows, the first glance at whom assured me that they were cowards, and not worth serious treatment. They were both so much larger than I that they did not deem it worth while to take even a club to me, and one of them grabbed my coat with sublime confidence. My weapons were handy, but

unneeded. The largest fellow stood just in front of the rail, so loose, so unbalanced, that it would have been a sinful waste of opportunity not to tumble him. Just as he reached his left hand for my watch, biff! biff! with left and right—his heels caught on the rail and down he went as only a big and clumsy animal can fall. Then I whipped out the knife and started for the amateur robbers, with a murderous face, but chuckling inwardly—a chuckle which broke into open laughter as they fled incontinently down the track, their tatters streaming behind upon the wind. It was cheap fun and no danger, for I was armed and they were not; and the laugh lasts whenever I recall their comical cowardice.

At Independence, Missouri, I heard a good deal of the notorious train robbers and murderers, the James "boys," and had a long talk with Frank James, who was the brains of the gang, as his unlamented brother Jesse was its authority. He looked very little like the typical desperado—a tallish, slender, angular, thin-chested, round-shouldered, dull-eyed fellow, of cunning but not repulsive face, and an interesting talker. The home nest of the outlaws was about Independence, and many of the citizens who were not their sympathizers had participated in some of the exciting attempts to capture the criminals. Frank was as free as you

or I, a prominent figure at the country fairs, and a rather influential personage, — all of which struck me as a trifle odd. I found him in the post-office, reading his big bundle of mail — most of which, as the chirography betrayed, was from the "softer" sex. His hands were long, taper, and flexible; his feet particularly "well-bred." He talked unreservedly of his trials, and was very sarcastic about the then fashionable habit of attributing to his "gang" most of the crimes in the United States. I also ran across several of the self-appointed heroes who had sought and conscientiously failed to catch the miscreants after their various robberies and murders, and heard of their blood-curdling adventures.

For several days after leaving Kansas City where I made a very brief stay, — since cities are plenty enough, and I was walking to see something less hackneyed and more interesting, — my course lay along the pretty valley of the Kansas River, properly named the Kaweily, but in common parlance the Kaw; and very pleasant days they were. My feet were all right now, and there was no drawback to absolute enjoyment — except the mosquitos, which hung about me in clouds, biting even through my thick, long stockings, whose red was almost lost under their swarm. But that was for one day only. At Lawrence, Kansas, I bought a piece of netting, sewed it into a long cylinder open

at the bottom, and gathered at the top so that it would just go over the crown of my broad hat, from whose brim it fell to my feet. After that the bloodthirsty little pests got no more satisfaction from my veins.

At Lawrence, too, I visited the Indian school, then just being completed, where some of my swarthy young friends of later years are now being educated, and also witnessed some fishing which seemed very odd. The Kaw abounds in huge cat-fish, ranging as high sometimes as one hundred and fifty pounds, and they are fond of lying in the wild waters below the sheeting of the Lawrence dam. There are three or four old boatmen who go fishing for them under water, and with curious tackle — only a big, sharp, steel hook securely strapped to the right arm. Diving into the current, they grope along the bottom until they touch the eel-like hide of one of these "hornpouts," and then jab the hook into the fish wherever they can, like a gaff. There is then a fearful struggle, for a large fish has great strength when in his native element; and shortly before my visit one of the most expert of these diver-fishermen hooked a "cat" too big for him, and was dragged down and drowned before he could unstrap the hook from his arm and thus escape.

I made quick work of "stepping off" Kansas; and, after the Kaw Valley had fallen behind me, with

daily growing interest. A couple of hundred miles from Kansas City it began to feel as if I were getting "really out West." In one day I stepped upon a young rattlesnake — which was luckily too cold and sluggish to strike me before I could jump off — and saw my first "dog town," with its chattering rodents and stolid owls, my first sage-brush and cactus and cattle rancho. And the Plains impressed me greatly. They seemed lonelier and more hopeless than mid-ocean. Such an infinity of nothing — such a weight of silence! The outlook was endless; it seemed as if one could fairly see the day after to-morrow crawling up that infinite horizon!

The 15,000-acre ranch seemed very big to me then, — it was before the farther West had accustomed me to 100,000 acres and upwards, — and was very interesting with its 8000 sheep, 500 high-bred cattle, a score of cowboys, and other things in proportion. The night I was there the coyotes jumped a high fence and made sad havoc among the valuable sheep in the corral; and this seemed still more as if I were coming to the borders of an interesting land.

At Ellsworth, which was then a rather "hard" village, I first found the cowboy dandy in all his glory of $20 sombrero, his fringed and beaded dog-skin coat and chapparejos (seatless overalls to pro-

tect the legs from thorns), his costly boots with ridiculous French heels, his silver-inlaid spurs jingling with silver bells, and the pair of pearl-mounted six-shooters at his belt. I was shy of him at first, but have since found him a very good fellow in his rough way, and have experienced at his hands in the Southwest countless pleasures and no troubles.

From Ellsworth I made a strong spurt, just to see what I could do in twenty-four hours. The conditions were very favorable — the hard, smooth turf roads are admirable to walk upon, and I was in perfect trim and unincumbered. In twenty-four hours I had trotted to Ellis, an even seventy-nine miles. The distance was made in twenty-one hours, and the record would have been better had I not fallen asleep when I sat down to rest, and thus lost three hours. Walking and I were on good terms now, and every day scored from thirty to forty miles; but that spurt from Ellsworth to Ellis was the longest day's walk I ever made.

At Hays City, a cowboy who had gambled away his money, pistols, and pony concluded to walk with me to Wallace, where he had a brother that he "reckoned would stake him." He had lost his money at a pleasant bull-fight at Caldwell the preceding Sunday, and was evidently used to very tough companionship; but I found him good-

hearted, lenient toward my ignorance in matters whereof he was expert, and, altogether, a very spicy and entertaining comrade for the one hundred and thirty-one miles in which he shared my "bed and board." Walking was agony to him in those tight, tall-heeled boots, but he was game to the ends of his toes, and hobbled on so pluckily that I gave up my haste and adopted a gait which was easier for him. At Wa Keeny I took up my rifle and bought a blanket, as the nights were getting cold. It was a big one while it had to be carried, but when cowboy Bill Henke and I both had to curl up in it at night it was very small, and I could get neither enough of it to keep out the winds of the plains nor to escape from my companion, who nearly snored my head off nightly. But we had a very good time by day, popping prairie-dogs and snakes and herons, watching the big balls of the curious "tumble-weed" which dries up in the fall, cracks from its stem, and at the invitation of the first vagrant wind goes tumbling somersaults off over the plains to visit its relatives maybe a hundred miles away — racing with that most agile of snakes, the "blue-racer," or marvelling at the speed with which his horny-nosed cousin, the "auger-snake," will go down through the hard dry turf, getting himself out of sight in a very few moments.

At Wallace I left Henke to his brother and pushed on alone over the bare, dry, endless, waterless plains, sometimes reaching a wee and shabby slab town, but more often sleeping out on the crisp, brown grass. It was getting up in the world, too. In the less than 500 miles from Kansas City I had been steadily climbing an inclined plane, and was now nearly 4000 feet above the sea. Indeed, after passing the Colorado line, there were very few days in the next 1200 miles when I was at an altitude much less than 5000 feet.

A few years before, the vast plains of the Southwest had been black with countless herds of buffalo; but the pot-hunter, the hide-hunter, and, worst of all, the soulless fellow who killed for the mere savagery of killing, had already exterminated this lordly game. The last of the buffaloes was killed at Cheyenne Wells just as I passed — a grizzled old bull, who was the sole survivor of his nomad race. But the turf was cut everywhere still with their deep, narrow trails; and every now and then I came to the grass-grown "wallows," where the great bovine hunchbacks had scooped out "bowls" in the turf by revolving upon their backs, to be rid of the tormenting swarms of gnats.

I had grown robust as a young bison myself. "Out-of-doors" is a glorious tonic, and when I rose each morning from the brown lap of Mother

Earth, I seemed to have realized the fable of Antæus. My lungs were growing even larger, my eyes were good for twice their usual range, and every sinew stood out on my skin like a little strand of cord. As for my feet, they were much in the condition of those of the barefoot Georgia girl of whom Porte Crayon tells as standing by the hearth. "Sal!" cried her mother, "the's a live coal under yo' foot!" Sal did not budge, but looked up stupidly, and drawled, "*Which* foot, mam?"

II

REALLY "OUT WEST"

My First Antelope. — Playing with Rattlesnakes. — Up the Backbone of the Continent. — A Bootful of Torture. — Sung to Sleep by Coyotes. — "Held Up" again. — Making up for Lost Meals.

Trudging up the long, smooth acclivity, pausing now and then for a shot at the flocks of sandhill cranes that purred far overhead, I stepped across the imaginary line into Colorado — my fifth State — and in the cool, enchanted dusk of an October evening swung into First View. The "town" consisted of a section house, where a supper of rancid bacon, half-raw potatoes, leaden bread flounced with sorghum, and coffee which looked exactly like some alkaline pools I wot of and tasted about as cheerful, encouraged my lonely belt to reassert itself. There was no temptation to sleep in the infested house, and after supper I found a luxurious little gully in the grassy plain, gathered a little resin-weed for a pillow, spread my sleeping-bag on the

soft sand, and turned in. Just as I was dozing off a tiny patter roused me, and, opening my eyes, I saw the sharp, inquisitive face of a coyote looking down at me from the bank not five feet above. I slid my hand softly to my forty-four, but he was off like a shot, carrying with him the pretty pelt for which I was so anxious.

Next morning, before the sun had climbed above the bare, brown divides of Kansas, I rolled out of "bed," danced about a few moments in the cold morning air to unlimber my joints, and then hastened to introduce my chattering teeth to a breakfast which would have swamped any less burglar-proof stomach. Its only merit was that it was warming. As the day burst into bloom, the section people pointed out the faint patch of white upon the far-off western sky from which First View takes its name — the noble head of Pike's Peak, which half a century ago was one of the saddest and most romantic goals toward which man ever struggled. It is nearly one hundred and fifty miles from First View.

Then, filling the long magazine of my Winchester and stowing a quart bottle of water in one of the capacious pockets of my coat, I struck out at a rapid gait northwestwardly, desiring to hunt well out into the plains and still get back to Kit Carson, fifteen miles ahead, before night. It is no easy

walking upon the plains at this season of the year. The short, brown buffalo grass soon polishes one's soles till they shine like glass, and directly the feet slip, so that it is rather hard to tell whether the step carries one farther forward or the slide farther back.

Ten slippery miles must have been traversed in this dubious and aggravating locomotion before my eyes rested on the object of their search. Three or four miles off, in a low divide, were four tiny gray dots. They had no apparent shape, nor did they seem to move; but the hunter's eye — even when it has been abused by years in chasing the alphabet across a white page — is not easily fooled. They were antelope — and the next thing was to get them.

The theories of antelope-hunting were sufficiently familiar to me by reading, but when put into practice they did not fully bear out the books. A big red bandanna, tied to the end of my bamboo staff, was soon flapping to the wind, and I lay fully an hour behind a handy rosette of the Spanish dagger, innocently expecting my game to come straight up to me — as they should have done according to all precedent in the stories. Their attention soon grasped my signal, and they did sidle toward me by degrees, demurely nibbling the dry grass as they advanced. But they had prob-

ably seen auction flags before, and after perhaps a mile of their herbivorous advance they stopped, and even began grazing away from me. It was plain that any further advances toward an acquaintance must come from me.

Leaving the banner snapping in the wind, I crawled backward on my stomach some hundred yards to the foot of my low ridge, and then, behind its shelter, started on a dog-trot up the ravine. For half a mile or so this shelter lasted, and thence I had to crawl flat on my face from sage-brush to cactus and from cactus to sage-brush, for fully a mile, dragging the rifle along the ground, and frequently stabbed by inhospitable cactus needles. At last, only three hundred yards away, I pushed the Winchester over a little tuft of blue-stem; but before my eye could run along the sight, the buck gave a quick stamp, and off went the four like the wind. It was a very sore hunter that clambered stiffly to his feet and shook an impotent fist at those vanishing specks, already half a mile away, and limped back to where the flag and coat were lying.

But ill-luck can never outweary perseverance; and a couple of hours later came my revenge. Just as my head came level with the top of an unusually high swell a sight caught my eye which made me drop as if shot. There in the hollow, not over two hundred and fifty yards away, were three antelope

grazing from me — an old buck with two-inch prongs on his antlers, a young buck, and a sleek doe. By good luck they did not suspect my presence, and it must have been minutes that I watched the pretty creatures through a tuft of grass before I pulled the trigger. As the smoke blew back past me I saw the old buck spring high in the air, run a few rods, and pitch forward upon the earth. His companions stood bewildered for a second, unknowing which way to run, and that hesitation was fatal to the young buck. He started north, but before he had run a hundred feet another bullet broke his spine. Before another cartridge could jump from magazine to barrel the doe was out of sight.

Beautiful animals are these shy rovers of the plains, graceful and slender as a greyhound, and fleeter of foot. I can think of nothing else so agile. They seem, when scared, not to run, but rather to fly upon the wind like exaggerated thistle-downs. They stand about three feet high, and weigh from forty to sixty pounds, but the smallest seemed to me much nearer six tons by the time I had "packed" him twenty miles. It took an hour's work, and the scouring of several acres to get together enough sage-brush, blue-stem and the bulbous roots of the soapweed to build a fire which would roast a few pounds of steaks, and despite the bitter ashes with which it was covered, meat never tasted better.

The later afternoon brought another experience — different, but no less exciting. A lucky shot brought down a large hawk at very long range, and I went over to get him. Coming back through a patch of thick, tall, gumbo grass to where my antelope and blanket lay, I was wading carelessly along when a sharp sk-r-r-r! under my very feet, sent me about a yard into the air. There were my tracks in the broken stems on each side of a big rattler. I had stepped right across him! Now he had thrown himself into a coil and was in unmistakably bad humor, with angry head and the dry whir of his tail, which moved so fast as to look like a yellow sheet. From boyhood I have had a curious affection for snakes — an attraction which invariably prompts me to play with them awhile before killing them when the one-sided romp is over. Even the scar of a rattlesnake bite on my forefinger, and the memory of its torture, have not taught me better.

Now I poked out the muzzle of my rifle to his angry snakeship, and no eye could follow the swift flash in which he smote it, his fangs striking the barrel with a little tick, as though a needle had been stabbed at a pane of glass. I know of nothing more dreamily delicious than to tease a rattler with some stick or other object just long enough to keep those grim fangs from one's own flesh. I

have stood for hours thus, thoughtless of discomfort, carried away by the indescribable charm of that grisly presence. Perhaps the consciousness of playing with death and as his master contributes something of that charm. Be that as it may, no one who has ever played with a rattlesnake can fully disbelieve the superstition that it fascinates its prey. I have felt it often — a sweet dreaminess which has tempted me to drop the stick and reach out my arms to that beautiful death. Unluckily for them, the field mouse and the rabbit have not a mulish man's will.

Talk of grace in the cat, the deer, and the swan, why, they are lubbers all beside that wondrous liquid form. Two-thirds of its length is coiled in a triple circle, the beaded tail forward, and up on the other circumference, while opposite and a trifle "eccentric" (as a machinist would say), towers a something which no man can describe. Afterward you may see that it was only a couple of feet of body, with an ugly little delta of a head; but in life it appears a distinct and superior creature. No other creature in the world, save it wear feathers, is capable of such absolutely unhampered motion. It swings, sweeps, waves from side to side, backward and forward, in liquid sinuousness that is so beautiful as to seem unreal. The tiny bead eyes, which never wink, glitter like

living diamonds; the strange, pink mouth, open wide and flat as a palm, twinkles its flexile thread of a tongue; and through all burrs the weird, dry kr-r-r-r! of that mysterious tail.

When our play was over, and it was time to hasten toward Kit Carson, I pinned the neck of the snake to the ground with the broad muzzle of the rifle, and reached around for my hunting-knife to chop off that unsafe head. Just as I was stooping thus above him he writhed loose, and quicker than thought made a lunge at my face. That hideous open mouth, which in that instant seemed larger than my hand, came within three or four inches of my nose; but luckily he struck short — for my wild jump backward was not a tithe swift enough to have escaped. But I must have made a considerable dent in the atmosphere. At last I got him pinned down again and finished him. Did you ever examine the wonderful adaptation of a rattler's head for its purposes of death? The teeth are like those of ordinary snakes, so tiny as to be hardly visible, and are only to assist in swallowing, for no snake chews. At the very outer rim of the upper jaw and a little back from the front are the fangs — two tiny points, fine as a cambric needle and about a quarter of an inch in visible length. They are imbedded in a strong, white, elastic muscle, and when the mouth is closed

they lie flat along its roof, pointing backward. Opening the mouth throws them forward, rigid and ready for action. They still "rake" backward, and therefore strike far more effectively. At the very back of the head, on each side of the neck, are the little bags which hold that strange, colorless, tasteless essence of death, and a very tiny duct leads from each to the base of its corresponding fang, which is hollow its whole length. The action of striking squeezes the bags, and a few drops of poison spurt in an infinitesimal stream, but with great force, through the duct and the hollow needles. I have been hit three feet away by the fluid, when a snake which shared my room for a year struck at me from the other side of a wire screen. The poison-bags give the head of a venomous snake that breadth at the back which make it a sort of triangle; and if you see any serpent without that, you may be sure he is not dangerous. The head of a harmless snake looks but little wider than his neck.

An hour later I killed a very tiny snake, only ten inches long, but with six rattles. He had the prettiest skin I ever saw; and he was so wee I "didn't know he was loaded." He was only half dead when I reached Kit Carson, and all that dozen miles was wriggling at the end of a string tied to a leg of the antelope on my shoulder, his

spasmodic mouth opening and shutting close to my fingers. I removed them from this careless proximity very hastily when the station agent shouted, "Why, you fool, he's twice as pizen as the big one!" The skin of the larger one served me as a hat band, until a mouse devoured it for me — as they have many such trophies since. I don't know why mice should be so fond of eating snake-skins — unless it is their only revenge on their traditional foe.

Kit Carson, which I reached that night, was a sad example of the "floating towns" of early Colorado. When it was the terminal of the track, it was a rough, bustling place of 6000 people. But soon the railroad poked a few miles further through the brown plains; the houses of Kit Carson were torn down and moved to the new terminus; and so it went on; and the cities of a day had soon left only a station and a dugout or two, up to which the coyotes sneaked impudently as of yore.

The Big Sandy "flows" through Kit Carson. That is to say, there is a broad bed of parched sand, white with alkali dust, stretching along the plain, but no water visible. Scoop out a few handfuls of sand, however, and you will come to water, brackish with alkali, and effective enough to purge the ancient cities of the plain. That "river" fol-

lows the track for about fifty miles, and is the most navigable stream in Eastern Colorado. I had not seen a real stream since I left little Ellis, three hundred and thirty-seven miles from Denver. There were one or two beds with occasional pools in their hollows, but nothing better in all that long, arid stretch. There is one little muddy, cattle-infested pond near Kit Carson, whose acre and a half of surface was covered thick with fat mallard ducks, of which I managed to get a couple. Here also I killed my first centipede — a hideous fellow, six inches long, a quarter of an inch across the back, and with about a hundred bow-legs, each tipped with a black fang. Let one walk across your hand undisturbed, and he leaves a highly inflamed red track. Hit him during that march, and he will sink those hundred fangs into your flesh, and it will rot away and drop from the bones. Rattlesnakes and huge, hairy "bush-spiders" are also common enough; but the most dreaded creature in all that wilderness is the skunk! The natives are mortally afraid of these pretty but unpleasant fellows, and declare that their bite is sure death. The bite of any animal — even man — when in a rage is highly poisonous, and I dare say the black-and-white terror of the plains largely deserves his bad repute. He is very ready to attack men. The wildest laugh I ever

had was at a lonely rancho one moonlit night when we all slept out of doors. I awoke to see the undressed ranchero fleeing about the house as though the very deuce were after him, yelling "murder!" at every jump, and a big striped skunk loping after him, in great apparent enjoyment of the race.

Saturday night brought me to Bo-ye-ro — a little water tank thirty miles west of Kit Carson — after a long, vain hunt for antelopes. The only game I saw was one "cotton-tail" (the small, ordinary rabbit), and he was in such a sorry pickle that I made no offer to shoot him. A huge, dark eagle, with swooping wings that must have spread over six feet, had his big, sharp talons fixed in the poor little fellow's wool, and flopped along over him as he ran. How the rabbit yelled! In that still, open air you might have heard him a mile, and his screams were almost human in their agony. Before the great bird had flown away with his quarry, however, he spied me and soared off, while poor cotton-tail limped to his hole to die — for a rabbit never survives even a trifling scratch.

My stomach is never likely to forget those days across the Colorado plains. Meals were procurable only at the far-apart section-houses — and such meals! Had it not been for the rifle I should probably have been starved out. Tough and

ancient corned beef; bread the color and consistency of Illinois mud; coffee suggestive of the Ohio "on a raise"; fermented molasses; butter which needs no testimonial from me, being old enough to speak for itself; and potatoes with all the water the rivers lack — that was the range of the bill of unfair. A fifty-verse song, which one of the section-men at White Horse sang, touched a responsive chord of my abused within: —

> "His bread was nothin' but corndodger,
> His beef you couldn't chaw,
> But he charged us fifty cents a meal
> In the State of Arkansaw!"

As for the sleeping, the softest beds to be found — and the only clean ones — were the sand and the grass; and upon them I stretched my sleeping-bag nightly, writing till late by the wavering fire of grass and little roots, and then turning over for so sweet a sleep as beds of down seldom know. My feet, too, shared the adversity, though now so tough. In hunting I was continually stepping — when my eyes were busy — into patches of the prickly pear, and more than once the maddening needles pierced shoes and foot. Once, when I stumbled and fell several feet into such a patch, hundreds of the sting-like daggers went half an inch through either shoe, pointing forward. I could not cut off the shoe and walk barefoot a

hundred miles to a store, and to walk in them was equally impossible. So they had to be pulled off — an indescribable torture, which was like pulling out violently a hundred bedded fish-hooks — and then the needles had to be carefully plucked from the shoe.

But for these drawbacks there were equal atonements. That high, dry air was an exhilarating joy to the swelling lungs; and the eyes, sharpened daily to their long-forgotten keenness, feasted full on a sight whose memory will never dim. The snowy range of the Rockies, shutting the whole western sky from north to south, far as sight could reach — dazzling white by day, melting to indescribable purples at dawn and dusk, distant, severe, and cold — they are the picture of a lifetime. For three hundred miles north and south those serrate battlements split the sky, with here and there the sentinel heads of loftier peaks upreared. Ninety miles to the south stood the vast pyramid of Pike's Peak, its great gray head rising from the brown plains like a giant. North as far, frowned mighty Long's Peak, with broad shoulders overshadowing all its fellows, and head among the clouds; and between their host of brethren.

Pike's Peak is the most famous, but not the highest of the Colorado mountains. The altitude of the Sierra Blanca is 14,464 feet; Mount Evans,

14,430; Gray's Peak, 14,341; Long's, 14,271; Mount Wilson, 14,289; La Plata, 14,362; Uncompahgre, 14,235; Mount Harvard, 14,151; Mount Yale, 14,121; Mount of the Holy Cross, 14,176; Culebra, 14,049; Pike's Peak, 14,147. There are scores of other peaks from 10,000 to 13,000 feet high, and countless "foothills," of which each is taller than our noblest mountain in the East.

Near Magnolia a hard, mean-faced, foul-mouthed fellow met me, and before I fairly noticed him, had a cocked revolver under my nose with a demand to "give up my stuff." I was considerably worried, but a look into his eyes convinced me that he lacked what is called, in the expressive idiom of the plains, "sand." "Well," I drawled, "I haven't very much, but what there is you are welcome to," and unbuttoning my coat deliberately, as if for a pocketbook, I jerked out the big, hidden forty-four, knocked the pistol from his fist with the heavy barrel in the same motion, and gave him a turn at looking down a muzzle. Now he was as craven as he had been abusive, and begged and knelt and blubbered like the cowardly cur he was. I pocketed his pistol, which is still among my relics, gave him a few hearty kicks and cuffs for the horrible names he had called me when he was "in power," and left him grovelling there.

So, striding light across the bare, dry plateaus,

over the alkali-frosted sands of waterless rivers, glad in the glorious air and the glorious view, knocking over an antelope now and then, companioned by squeaky prairie dogs and sung to sleep by the vociferous coyotes, I came, on the 23d of October, to handsome, wide-awake Denver, the Queen City of the plains.

Here I met my family, who had come by the swifter but less interesting Pullman, and we had four happy days together before they started for San Francisco by the Central Pacific, and I donned my knapsack again and turned my tough feet southward. And what a glorious revenge those four days in civilization gave my stomach upon its weeks of adversity! The waiters at the Windsor used to stand along the wall in respectful awe to see that wilderness of dishes before me explored, conquered, and finally overwhelmed!

III

IN AND OUT AMONG THE ROCKIES

Trout-Fishing in the South Platte. — A Wonderful Canal. — The Little Ranch on Plum Creek. — Playing Pack-Mule. — Coaxing a Rabbit from his Burrow. — A Hard Night. — Blown from a Bridge. — The Wonderland of the Rockies.

With an increased and decidedly irksome load I walked south from Denver, planning to reach Colorado Springs as speedily as possible, and thence make numerous side tours; but we spin not the thread of Clotho. At Acequia (a town named after the Spanish irrigating ditch, and popularly pronounced Saky) an accidental chat with the section foreman threw me a fortnight out of my course. He said there were "trout over behind yan hog-backs" — pointing to a long, rocky wall at the foot of the range, some twenty miles away. Trout? *Trout!* Why, for three years I had been fairly starving for a bout with those beauties — a hunger which the catfish and "lamplighters" of Ohio had

utterly failed to satisfy. Hardly pausing to thank the herald of joyful tidings, I took a bee-line across the rough plain at a five-mile gait, forgetful of dinner, my load — and indeed of everything save my polka-dotted idols over yonder. The range looked but two or three miles away at the outset; but when I had walked rapidly for three solid hours and the dusk was closing in, it seemed farther away than ever, and the wolf began to gnaw at my belt. Just in the edge of night I found a shabby little cabin on Plum Creek, whose kindly, inquisitive folk found a good supper and a good bed for me. But my heart sank when they declared with great positiveness that there were no trout within two days' march, and they "reckoned they mout know, bein's they'd lived in them mount'ns goin' on twenty year." So to-morrow I was to have no trout, but only that pretty tramp back to the railroad. I dreamt that night that a monster trout was swallowing the section foreman; and I heartily wished the dream might come true.

But with the morning came better thoughts. I would see for myself — and sunrise found me scrambling over the steep, rocky foothills toward Turk's Head. At two in the afternoon a sandy side ravine brought me suddenly out into the bottom of the Platte Cañon, beside the shouting river. A glorious little stream it is — clear and confident

and headstrong as youth, cold as ice, swift as an arrow, rollicking noisily along the tortuous, boulder-strewn channel it has chiselled, down through a thousand feet of granite.

Two minutes later I was trimming the branches from a long, heavy young cottonwood, and attaching a line. Grasshoppers were plenty in the cañon —and soon plenty in the case of my harmonica. Just where a huge ledge jutted twenty feet into a deep pool of delicious green I made the first cast. As the 'hopper fell within a foot of the water, whizz! came a flash from the depths high into the air, smote the bait with dexterous tail, and drove it straight into an open mouth. Splash! Swish! Off went the line, sawing through the deep water, while that twenty-pound mollusk of a pole bent fairly double. What a glorious electricity it is that tingles through your fingers at that first strike of a trout. The pickerel of our lily-flecked New England ponds seizes his prey with a barely comparable rush, but then he goes loafing away, mincing at the minnow critically, dubious whether to swallow or no; and when you snub him he soon pulls in like a limber stick. The bass, be he green, striped, or black, fights doggedly to the last, but he is too clumsy. But when King Trout—the athlete, the sage, and the hero of fish—makes up his cunning head that he'll risk that specious fly,

then look out for music! From the instant he first touches the hook, until you tear him, still fighting, from his rippling kingdom, there is no time to breathe. Your line hisses down stream as if tied to a bullet. Then as swiftly it tears up against the current. If there be a snag, a root, a tangling rock in that whole pool around which Sir Trout may tie your line in a double knot, rest assured he will do it — unless you hold a steady rein on him. He will double, leap high above the water, dive to the rocky bottom, turn, twist, and jerk with infinite ingenuity, to tear the cruel Limerick from his jaw. And if at last you lift him upon the bank in safety you need feel no shame that in the contest of wits it has taken your very keenest to beat that cold-blooded little fellow.

It took me full five minutes to land my game, though he weighed but three-quarters of a pound; and when he flopped beside me on the bank I threw up my hat and whooped and danced as wildly as twenty years before. During the afternoon I caught twenty more, and in that whole noble string one could not tell "t'other from which," so exactly were they of a size. Away up on the headwaters, back of Pike's Peak, in a rough and trackless wilderness, a few days later, I found much larger trout. The Rocky Mountain trout are not nearly so beautiful as the princes of the Maine and New Hamp-

shire brooks, of which they look like a blurred and faded reprint, but none the less they are famous sport.

The cañon of the South Platte is about thirty miles long; and though tame compared with the inner gorges of the range, is wild and cliff-crowded, and rock-strewn and tortuous enough to impress the most careless. The sinuous narrow-gauge Denver and South Park Railroad winds like a steel snake along the bank of the noisy little river, wriggling between huge boulders, crawling around the feet of granite giants that the rains and frosts of ten million years have carved from the eternal rock. The shaggy cliffs rise a thousand feet above the restless stream, and here and there are mirrored in the pellucid pools.

Near the northern end of this cañon is the beginning of a remarkable canal — the "high-line" irrigating ditch. This canal had then a total length of eighty-three miles, a width of twenty feet, and carried 1184 cubic feet of water per second past a given point. For miles its bed is hewn from the living rock, and at one point in the cañon it burrows through the heart of a great mountain of red granite by a tunnel seven hundred feet long, twenty wide, and ten high. In Colorado, as in New Mexico, Arizona, and much more of the vast Southwest, the rainfall is too slight to nourish the crops, and the

necessity for irrigation has led to the construction of countless thousands of miles of ditches to bring water to the thirsty fields.

After a long and glorious mingling with the trout of the South Platte, I finally got back to the little rancho on Plum Creek, where my pack awaited me. As I attacked a late and lonely supper, the gawky son of the family sat up to the table and leisurely dressed my fish under my very nose — but a hunter's stomach does not mind these little things. My host was a "York Yankee," shaggy-browed and weathered, inclined to be sociable, but never spendthrift of words.

In the seven years ending with 1878, Colorado was devoured by grasshoppers. Her corn-fields disappeared as by fire; the grass which is the life of her millions of horses, cattle, and sheep was stripped to the roots, and her trees shivered in leafless nakedness. One July morning in 1875 my old Yankee drove off to Denver. When he got home next evening his twenty acres of corn was absolutely wiped from off the face of the earth, his cattle range was bare ground, and not a straw was left of his tall stacks. He showed me where the ravenous insects had even gnawed half through the sheathing at the bottom of the outer walls of the house.

So the old man rambled on; and at last, while I

resumed my writing at the rickety table, the honest ranchero and his buxom spouse disrobed and sought their virtuous couch in the nearest corner. They had a few cattle, and lived by selling butter, cord-wood, and railroad ties — the latter hewed in the mountains and hauled out by gaunt but tireless little ponies over "roads" more unspeakable than those of the Virginia hills. Their rancho was school-lands, which they neither bought nor rented, but had simply to pay taxes upon; and they were condoling with a neighbor who had leased some of these lands and had to pay a yearly rental of twenty-five cents an acre.

My writing kept me busy till within two hours of sunset next day, and then there was a rough seventeen miles between me and the necessary post-office. Over hills and valleys, gullies, irrigating ditches, and cactus I stumbled on through the dark, steering by the stars; and at last reached Sedalia, just in time for the mail, but wet, lame, and ravenous. A pair of scales showed me that my load — the heavy rifle and six-shooter, cartridge-belt, knapsack, blanket, change of shirt and stockings, etc., weighed thirty-seven pounds; and that at once struck me as "riding a free horse to death." Thenceforth all that could possibly be spared went ahead from station to station on the broader shoulders of the express company; and many a night I

nearly froze for want of the blanket which was sure to be ahead of or behind me.

Lightened by twelve grateful pounds I resumed the march next day, zigzagging for a week from road to mountains and back again, as the whim seized me, finding enough game to be interesting, and enjoying every moment as keenly as only trained muscles and careless mind can enjoy. One cotton-tail that I shot near Castle Rock rolled down his burrow dead, and would have escaped me but for a boyhood lesson from old Hugh, back in the White Mountains. With the end of my staff I could just feel the limp fur at the bottom of the hole. Wetting the end of the stick with my mouth, I put it down until it touched bunny, and twisted it around gently a few times. Then, when I drew it carefully out, there was the rabbit at the end, bound by a delicate cable of his own silky hair.

The full moon was high overhead as I wound through the lonely cañon of Plum Creek; and midway of that bare defile my ears pricked up at an old familiar sound, for years unheard and almost forgotten — the long, weird howl of the gray wolf. It is a cry to make the blood curdle; but there was no answering yell, and after the first startled grab at the butt of my forty-four I plodded on.

At Larkspur that night there awaited me a cold welcome. It was bitter weather. Under the water-

tank the ice was three inches thick, and the savage wind roared down the cañon in icy gusts. There was no place to sleep save in the "bunk-house." That had one occupant, and he had one blanket. My own was in Colorado Springs, and not even a gunny-sack was to be found to mitigate the night. The old track-walker shivered under his one tattered cover, and would have no fire in the battered stove; he said it "would make the boogs too wa-akeful." I froze on the bare planks till midnight and then in desperation took the law and the stove into my own hands and built a roaring fire, which made the night endurable, though I had to sally forth several times before morning to "rustle" fuel.

From Larkspur to the top of the divide, 8000 feet above sea level, was a steady uphill pull, growing cooler at every step and in the teeth of the very worst wind I ever encountered. By afternoon it was a perfect gale, against which I could make scant two miles an hour by the most violent exertion. At the door of one lonely house I knocked, and politely asked if they could lend me an auger. "What d'ye want of a auger?" snapped the hard-faced woman who answered my rap. "Why, I thought, madam, that it might help me bore through this wind" — but she slammed the door in the face of this ill-timed witticism, and I went without dinner to pay for being "funny."

The temperature kept falling and the gale rising as the day wore on. It was already generously below zero. Near the aptly named side track of Greenland, I was crossing a trestle which spans Carpenter's Creek when a sudden gust, resistless as a wall, swept me off bodily and flung me upon the ice and frozen sand a score of feet below. The ice — thanks to the wind — had but lately formed, and through I went into a shallow pool. It was better than falling on the slag rip-rap at the ends of the bridge; but the eight miles to shelter, walking with clothing frozen stiff as a plank and nearly every bone in my body aching, were anything but hilarious.

From the top of the divide there were no temptations from a straight road to Colorado Springs, the lovely little city in the edge of the plain under the very shadow of Pike's Peak. Just back of town is a hillock one hundred and fifty feet higher than the main street, sarcastically known as Mount Washington, because it has just the same altitude above sea level as the chief of our Eastern mountains.

Not far back into the foothills from Colorado Springs begins the Garden of the Gods — a wonderland fitly named. Here, walled in by rock-bound peaks, is a wild glen of 2000 acres, and in it, amid the murmuring pines, a hundred colossal towers and castles, pinnacles and battlements hewn by time

from the deep red sandstone. In the centre of a great amphitheatre four titanic crags, blood-hued and radiant, burst from the level ground and soar three hundred feet aloft. Their tops are fretted into jagged points, and their sides worn smooth and sheer. One of the strange "monuments" in this "land of the standing rocks" is little larger around than a barrel, but fifty feet high. The heights of shaggy Olympus were tame beside this stone vision. Perchance fat Bacchus and knotty Hercules, returning from some godly revel, stopped at these then uncarven cliffs; and while the tricksy fancy of the God of Wine mapped out the imagery of what now is, the God of Muscle twisted and tore the sandstones to these fantastic shapes. But I do not wish to describe that wonderland — even if I could. It is something which every American should see; and seeing it he will realize how little can words give an idea of its radiant glory. Near by, too, are superb waterfalls, beautiful caves, and many other delights; and — what I fear was almost as interesting to me — trout!

IV

MOUNTAIN DAYS

Up Pike's Peak. — The Highest Inhabited Building. — The Costliest Cordwood in the World. — The Twin Gorges. — A Relic of the Argonauts. — The Odyssey of the Rockies. — Twice Scalped. — A Mountain Lion in the Stable.

Sallying forth from pretty little Manitou at 10 A.M. on November 4 I strode up the steep trail to Engleman's Cañon, bound for Pike's Peak. This was before the skyward railroad had been built or even planned, and to get to the top of that giant mountain one had then to earn his passage. But mountain-climbing was an old story, and for several miles I found little difficulty. The old trail was very rough and steep along the dashing brook, whose fringe of bushes bent with pear-shaped icicles. It seemed odd to see icicles with the big end down; but these came from the spray, which, of course, was thickest nearer the brook.

After getting up out of the cañon, and upon a

southerly spur of the peak, I began to find trouble with the snow, which had drifted a couple of feet deep in the trough-like trail. There was no dodging it, however, for outside the one path all was loose, sharp rocks. At the wild, desolate timberline, where the last scrubby dwarf of a tree clung sadly amid the rocks, matters grew worse; for as soon as I rounded Windy Point, a savage, icy blast from the snow-peaks of the Sangre de Cristo fairly stabbed me through and through. My perspiration-soaked clothing turned stiff as a board in five minutes, and the very marrow in my bones seemed frozen despite the violent exercise of climbing. Worst of all, it was almost impossible to breathe in the face of that icy gale, though otherwise I have never felt any of the unpleasant symptoms, either in heart, lungs, or nerves, experienced by many at that altitude.

It was 3.30 P.M. when I stood panting at the door of the signal service station on the very crest of Pike's Peak—then, and perhaps still, the highest inhabited building on earth. It is 14,147 feet above the level of the sea—more than two miles higher than most of you who read this. It was built in 1882 by the government at great expense. The building was a strong box of stone, some twenty feet by forty, with walls four feet thick, well padded, and contained five very comfortable rooms. Since my

time it has been enlarged. The corps of observers have a very fair time of it, except in winter, when they are imprisoned by the snow for months at a time. In summer the observer spends two weeks on the peak and then goes down to Colorado Springs for a fortnight, being relieved by his chum, who comes up from a vacation, as he goes down to one. The observations of the various instruments for recording temperature, velocity of wind, changes of weather, etc., have to be recorded five times a day.

Every article of supply has to be "packed" up that long, narrow trail on burros. The fuel is pine wood transported from timber-line on burro-back, six sticks at a load. Uncle Sam owns the wood, but has to pay $23 a cord for cutting and hauling it up. It costs some $1300 a year to warm the one room used as an office. So it is very high fuel, in more senses than one.

There are many curious things about an altitude of two miles and a half above the sea. The nerves are always affected seriously in time, and often very unpleasantly at once. Few people can sleep at first at such an elevation. The rare air seems to evaporate on one's skin, and leaves a delicious coolness like that from an alcohol bath. The great lessening of the atmospheric pressure gives a strange and delightful sense of buoyancy.

Mount Washington and its signal service were old friends of mine, and I was interested in a comparison between the old New Hampshire monarch and the noble Western peak. Timber-line is only a relative term; and though Pike's Peak is far more than twice as tall as its Eastern brother, and the latter would make only a literal hole-in-the-ground in the plains at its base, the distance from timber-line to summit is nearly the same on the two mountains. The weather is far severer on Mount Washington than on Pike. The winds attain a velocity of fifty per cent greater, and, owing to the far greater density of the air, are much more powerful in proportion. The mean temperature is much lower, and the extreme cold of the lesser peak is never paralleled on the greater.

The view from Pike's Peak is of the noblest and strangest. Such a vista could only be where the greatest mountains elbow the infinite plains. Eastward they stretch in an infinite sea of brown. At their edge are the cameos of Manitou and Colorado Springs; the Garden of the Gods, now a toy; the dark thread of the Ute Pass, through which, in Leadville's palmy days, streamed the motley human tide. Seventy miles north is the cloud that is Denver. Fifty miles to the south, the smoke of Pueblo curls up from the prairie, falls back and trails along the plain in a misty belt,

that reaches farther eastward than the eye can follow. A little pond-like broadening in this smoke-river shows the location of La Junta, one hundred miles away. West of south, in long and serried ranks, stand the Culebra and Sangre de Cristo ranges, while nearer, tower the southern walls of the Grand Cañon of the Arkansas. Off to the west are the far giants of the Rockies in incomparable phalanx — for Pike stands in regal isolation a hundred miles from any peer. His sole companions are the 10,000 and 12,000 foot "foothills" that look up in awe to his lofty throne.

With the setting of the sun came a sight even more memorable. As the red disk sank behind the west, the gigantic shadow of the peak crept up on the foothills, leapt across to the plains, and climbed at last the far horizon and stood high in the paling heavens, a vast, shadowy pyramid. It is a startling thing to see a shadow in the sky. For a few moments it lingers and then fades in the slow twilight.

A perpendicular mile below my feet that night the soft, fleecy clouds went drifting along the scarred flanks of the grim, unmindful giant, while the full moon poured down on them her cold, white glory. Dimmer than the clouds, I traced the white wraiths of Pike's brother titans, as they tossed back the snow-hair from their furrowed brows, and

stared solemnly at the round-faced moon. The icy wind howled against the low building, or dashed off to drive his cloud-flocks scurrying hither and yon down the deeper passes of the range. Time seems hardly to exist up there. Alive, one is yet out of the world. The impression could hardly be stronger if one stood upon a planet sole in all space.

On the afternoon of the 5th, I jumped and slid the twelve miles from the station down to Manitou in an hour and fifty-one minutes — a downhill race which is very exhilarating at the time, but is apt to have wearisome results on the tendons of unpractised legs. Next day I set out early, meaning to explore the twin Cheyenne cañons and get twenty miles or so out on the abandoned "cut-off" road from Colorado Springs to Cañon City. But again those speckled rascals upset my plans. That unmistakable brown flash in one of the pools of the south cañon banished all other thoughts, and from exploring I turned to gathering belated grasshoppers. A good string of trout soon dangled at my belt, and then a rolling boulder pitched me a dozen feet into an icy pool, and gave me a severely sprained ankle. That ended the fun, and I had to be content with hobbling through the two small, but beautiful, gorges.

There is a fascination of their own about these

twin gorges; and though they are small and I have since explored the sublimest cañons on earth, the memories of Cheyenne will linger with me long. At the northern flank of Cheyenne Mountain — a peak without a base, and thrusting its grizzly head 4000 feet out of the flat prairie — the north and south forks of Cheyenne Creek, split by a huge crag, come racing down the mountain ridges, cold as ice, clear as crystal, and forever white with foam from their breathless leaps. To my taste, the South Cañon is the more interesting, though there is little choice. On either hand beetle seamed and jagged mountains of solid rock; and between their grim walls dashes the impetuous stream — too clear and effervescent to be profaned by the malarial title of creek. A short stretch beyond, the cliffs seem actually to meet and blend. Their crags, five hundred feet high, are not more than thirty feet apart, and a sudden angle beyond apparently obliterates even this gap. This titanic inner portal is the gem of the whole locality; but the entire two-mile walk to the head of the cañon is an ever-varying delight. At every step some new pinnacle, or crag, or cliff, peers down at the beholder, and the great ruddy mountains themselves change from ridges to peaks, or from peaks to ridges, as the point of view is shifted. Into the upper end of the cañon the brook comes shouting down over

"the Seven Falls" — a beautiful cascade in seven leaps of from ten to thirty feet each. A rude staircase scales the cliff beside the tumbling water; and on two apparently inaccessible crags three hundred feet above are tiny observatories, commanding a glorious view of the surrounding country.

But that pestiferous ankle made sight-seeing drag, and at last I limped off into the plains and was glad enough to stop at the first cabin in my way.

It was a very interesting spot — not for the rough little shanty, but for the battered, grizzly old miner whose home it was. He got home, a few minutes after my arrival, from the mountains, where he had been pecking away at one of his eighteen prospect-holes since the preceding January, while his two young boys "ran the ranch." For twenty years this shaggy-browed, tangle-bearded old man had been stumping across the ranges, with pick and sledge and heavy drills and frying-pan and blankets and provisions on his thick, bent shoulders. And while drilling time, money, life, into the iron ribs of the Rockies, he had acquired the wonderful education of those who have had to carve their way through starvation and disappointment and danger.

It did me good to hear him growl away in some tale of the days in which he was part — when

Colorado was a patch of the great desert; when the three Ute tribes were thick as grasshoppers on the plains; when through the winter snows of the mountain passes struggled the long, gaunt train of chasers of the new Eldorado. How some staggered grimly onward under their heavy packs, while others sank sobbing in the great white drifts; how a few "struck it rich," while the forgotten thousands wore out their lives in toiling for the fortune that never came. This is the poetry and the romance of the Rockies. We hear of the few mining kings, — the golden accidents of fortune, — but who shall tell the epic of that great heart-break, that myriad suffering of the unrequited multitude? Beside that wild story, if it ever be written, the wanderings of Ulysses will seem a schoolboy's recess. These men left wives faithful as Penelope and never returned. They wandered farther and longer on blistered feet than the sage of Ithaca on his staunch galley. They pierced a stranger and wilder land than ever Cæsar dreamed of; and for the best long years of a rugged lifetime they suffered the rack of hardship and danger. The strong, true, virile simplicity of blind old Homer, the poet who wrote of real men, is gone. How he of Scio's rocky isle could have set in rolling verse the story of the Pacific Argonauts! And we shall never have that story in its strength

until another Homer rises to sing that Odyssey of the Rockies — the stormy wanderings of that great motley throng, the scum of great cities, the sinew of the workshop and the farm; the gamblers, ministers, lawyers, loafers, bankers, thieves, merchants, beggars, college boys, cowboys, lads and old men — that plodded across the vast, bare plains, struggled wearily but hopefully up the jagged mountain sides, waded the heavy snow and icy streams, froze and starved, but never despaired. How they ran hither and yon as delusive Hope blew her golden bubbles about them; how they tore up the channels of the wild mountain streams, and grew bent in handling the heavy sand in long rocker or flaring gold-pan; how they dug and scraped and washed, forgetting to eat and sleep, all for the sake of the little yellow scales that might blink up at them when the clean-up came. How young men became old and bent in the feverish chase, — some of them still roam, uneasy spectres, through the gulches of the farthest ranges, — and old men laid their weary bones to rest beside the lonely claim, the little buckskin bag of dust still clutched in their bony fingers. How men made fortunes in some golden placer and then dropped the last cent into some worthless hole. How paupers became princes, and princes paupers; and the man whose claim to-day was worth its hun-

dred thousands. to-morrow turned, a beggar, to "strike it again" in the hills. How that heterogeneous mass of humanity — akin only in the one absorbing passion — battled with cold and hunger, with disease and death, with beasts thirsty for blood, and desperate men still thirstier for gold — ah, that was our greatest, longest, strangest tragedy. It sends a thrill through one's veins to meet in some lonely cabin a gray-haired remnant of those old heroes whose superhuman valor and vigor opened these western States and Territories to civilization; the men whose persistent average of ill luck buried ten dollars in the ground for every dollar's worth of "dust" that was taken from it; yet paved the way to the prosperity of solid business. But to-day they are half forgotten. The mountain brooks go tumbling unchecked to the rivers; their bars of shifting sand are unturned by the greedy shovel, and the little grains of gold beneath rest free from prying eyes. For the days of gold-washing are practically over. Placers are still worked here and there, but they are mostly in the hands of slow-going foreigners; for the restless American is now delving for the rock-bound veins from which the placer gold originally came.

One of the old man's reminiscences was of the later but still "woolly" West. In 1877 a wealthy Detroiter went home from his mines in Leadville

and told some very large stories. His exaggerated and bragging accounts led several hundred poor men to return with him to Leadville, where he glibly promised them employment. They got there only to find the camp already crowded with unemployed men dependent on the charity of the miners. Most of them were without means, and soon starvation stared them in the face. When the miners learned the situation, they made the braggart millionnaire a frontier call. An impolite rope was stretched over a cedar branch, and one end discommoded his neck. "Now," said the visitors, "you fooled these men out here to starve, by your blowing. They've got no work and no way to get home. Give them fifty dollars apiece to take them back to Detroit, or you'll dance on nothing in less'n two minutes."

The millionnaire was mulish, and they swung him up once, twice, three times. At the third elevation he gasped surrender, and signed a check for the required amount. A trusty man galloped off toward distant Denver, and in a few days was back with the money to send the befooled Detroiters home.

A man who survives being scalped is a rare phenomenon; but one of the pioneers of Colorado went through that frightful experience twice and lived for years after. That was a happy-go-lucky

Irishman known as "Judge" Baldwin. He once owned the land on which Colorado Springs now stands, — being swindled out of it, so the story goes, by wealthy land-grabbers, — and on that very spot was scalped by the Utes in the early days.

A few years later, another party of savages on the war-path ran across the old miner, shot him, took what was left of his hair, and left him for dead in the mountains. He revived, however, and got to help, and in time fully recovered. After such wonderful escapes, Baldwin was found one morning drowned in two feet of water!

The sprained ankle was too painful to permit rapid walking next day, and I was glad when eighteen hobbling miles brought me at nightfall to a poor little ranch on waterless Turkey Creek, where a good-natured young man and his white-haired mother made me very welcome.

About midnight a fearful uproar in the stable aroused us; and when young Bixby and I ran out, dressed, as Bill Nye says, "in the garments of the night and a little brief authority," a huge mountain lion sprang out through the side of the little shed and went bounding off in the moonlight thirty feet at a leap, even after our startled shots had wounded him, as red drops next morning showed. Inside the shed one of the young calves lay dead,

its skull crushed and neck broken by one fearful cuff of that mighty fore paw.

Walking was still difficult next day, and I did not hurry, but limped leisurely along, now admiring the beautiful drift-quartz brought down from the frozen north in some prehistoric glacier's icy fist, and now amused by the clouds of chattering bluejays and impudent magpies. Here, too, I first became acquainted with the curious piñon — a real pine tree which bears nuts in its cones, and the most delicious little nuts I know.

Passing the night comfortably in the pretty Beaver Creek cañon, I started early next morning for a try at the trout. Soon, however, a figure outlined against the sky at the top of a great cliff made me drop my willow pole, unsling the Winchester from my back, and sneak up the cañon in quest of some point at which the cliff might be scaled. Such a long, breathless dance as that little flock of bighorns led me over cliff and cañon! and a fruitless one too, for with all my caution I could not get within a thousand yards of them. A strange animal is the cimarron, bighorn, or mountain sheep, as he is variously called. Take a large ram, double the size of his horns, plate his skull with four inches of hardest bone, and you have an approximation to the bighorn. It would be hard to find finer frontlets than his. Each ponderous

horn, curving three to five times upon itself, is thick at the base as a man's thigh, and all of one solid armor with the head. The bighorn does not with malice aforethought leap from high cliffs and alight upon his head, to save the trouble of going around, according to the popular fable; but he is sometimes forced off or slips, sure-footed as he is, and then that wonderful helmet stands him in good stead. His head is the heaviest part of his body, and he is almost sure to strike upon it; and it seems none the worse for an incredible fall. It is a sight to petrify the unaccustomed hunter when he sees Don Cimarron fall fifty feet upon a ledge of rocks, rebound into the air, alight upon his feet and leap away as though nothing had happened to give him so much as a headache.

A little side-cañon near the "Buffalo Sloughs" led me that afternoon to the rude, lonely cabin of a gray-haired hunter. He hobbled out as I came up and shared my tobacco on a sunny rock. "Old Monny" was the wreck of very much of a man. His once stalwart figure was hideously bent and twisted. The right shoulder was all misshapen; and the right leg only an awful rope of bone in many knots, and with hardly more flesh than my wrist has. Five years ago that day, roughly tender hands had carried Monny from Dead Man's Cañon, a cripple for life. He and his "pardner"

were toiling up the gorge, their small-bore, muzzle-loading Kentucky rifles over their shoulders. Suddenly, from behind a huge boulder they had just passed, lumbered noiselessly a huge brown-yellow beast, heavy as a fattened steer. A wild screech from his chum whirled Monny about, and looking back, he saw the huge cinnamon bear upreared over a still palpitating corpse, whose blood and brains were dripping from one gigantic paw. Monny threw his long, heavy barrel to as steady a level as if the game had been a squirrel, and drove the little leaden pellet through the lower half of the monster's heart. But a cinnamon dies hard; and before the hunter could reload or escape up the precipitous rocks the brute was upon him. Felling him with a blow that crushed his right shoulder like an eggshell, the bear fell dying at his side, chewing his leg from thigh to ankle, to its last breath, and then lurched dead across his almost corpse. And that is why there is one hunter who goes on a crutch to his beaver-traps and in quest of game. Monny showed me the skin of *his* bear — eleven feet four inches from tip of nose to root of tail! Upon the feet were still the crescents of claws, each six inches long; and on one side was the wee, round hole that had at last let out the great, savage life.

A few miles from Monny's cabin my long hunt

was rewarded. A very lucky long shot brought down a fine, black-tail deer, upon whose antlers were six spikes. A ranchero who bargained to haul the carcass out to town for me evidently concluded that the meat was worth more to him than the stipulated two dollars; for I never saw buck or ranchero again.

Along the roads in that part of Colorado I frequently came to ranches where children of two to six years were "staked" in front of the house by a long, strong rope, one end of which was securely knotted under their arms, while the other was fastened to a stake. This seemed very funny, but was really a sensible institution to keep the youngsters of that wild country from straying under the hoofs of the roving cattle or into the reach of wild beasts.

Late at night, hot and dusty from a thirty-five-mile scramble over "parks" and cañons, I pounded away at the door of the first house in Cañon City, where a greasy but abundant supper and a board "bed" on the floor beside the stove coaxed me to dream of almost everything except the remarkable experiences the morrow had in store.

V

SKIRTING THE ROCKIES

A Shadow saves my Life. — A Fine Cañon. — A Midnight Fight with a Wildcat. — A Frank Prayer. — Lucky Bassick and his Claim. — A Humble Friend in Need. — Finding a Comrade.

I was a good deal older than the youth of the Grecian myth when I fell in love with my own shadow, and it was not, as in his case, because of its beauty, but for its usefulness. Had I been one of those people who are "so thin they have to walk twice to make a shadow," I should not be writing now; for on that pretty November day, just out of Cañon City, there was no time for the second walking. That event recurs oftenest to my mind as an instance of what very slender threads they sometimes are by which our lives hang. Had it been a cloudy day, or had it been just as bright and the sun an hour higher, or had a certain road run south instead of west, or had it been fringed with grass instead of level dust, my tramp and my life would have ended together very abruptly.

Leaving the rifle in Cañon City, I started early to explore the Grand Cañon of the Arkansaw, whose bluff portals open a couple of miles west of town. Half-way thither I noticed a huge stone building against the side of a white hill of limestone, half hidden by the clouds from a score of limekilns. I had talked with no one in Cañon City, and had no idea what this building was; but at nearer approach the sight of watchful, hard-looking men, pacing up and down here and there, with six-shooters on their hips and double-barrelled shotguns over their shoulders, told the story as unmistakably as words told me later. Swarming about the kilns, delving in the hillside, and engaged at various other works, were hundreds of fellows in tell-tale stripes of black and white. It was the Colorado penitentiary, containing at that time three hundred and fifty-odd convicts — mostly murderers and "rustlers" (horse thieves) — all of whom worked outside the walls by day, unfettered, but under guard.

Never having seen prisoners thus loose, I grew interested and trotted like any other fool along the sidewalk, gazing curiously at the vicious faces of the hundred jailbirds who were at work on the two-foot wall at my very side. It did occur to me that my appearance caused considerable excitement among them; but I could not take the hint,

though their faces wore the very look of hungry wolves. I was walking westward, and the morning sun was behind my back — two trifles for which I have ever since been grateful. A group of convicts rallying to some work a few hundred feet to the south caught my eye and turned me half back to the wall. As I stopped to gaze at them, something seemed to drag my eyes down to the light, smooth dust in front of me, and there was what for an instant made my heart stop beating. It was only a shadow — a clear, sharp, long shadow thrown beside my familiar own — the shadow of a larger burly figure swinging a heavy stone-hammer above my very head! That silhouette on the sidewalk will never lose one clear-cut line in my memory. I had been stupid before, but I was awake now. To spring half-way to the middle of the road with a tremendous leap whose half I could not cover now, jerking my forty-four from its scabbard even while in the air, and to "throw down" on the convict with a savage "Halt!" was the work of an instant — and none too soon. The fellow and his mates sprang back to their work with looks of baffled rage, and one of the mounted guards came up in such a dash that he nearly rode me down. Two six-shooters were buckled to his waist, and his hard face wore an expression which was anything but pleasant.

"Why, you infernal blankety-blank fool," he snapped. "Don't you know no better'n to sashay along in reach o' them fellers, with a gun stickin' out handy-like? There's nineteen life-termers in thet gang you was a-huggin' up to so, an' thet pop o' yourn meant life an' liberty to any one on 'em thet could get his hooks onto it. 'Bout quarter 'f a secont an' your head would 'a' been mush, an' we'd 'a' had a break fur the hills. Now git out into the middle o' the road, d—n ye, an' keep ez fur from anything stripid ez you know how. Git!" I shivered a little and "got," and found no fault with the dust in the middle of the road. Ordinarily I do not like strangers to address me as brusquely as did this fortified person on the black horse, but under the circumstances it would hardly have made me resentful had he shaken me.

To guard this great body of desperate ruffians, there were thirty-eight guards on foot, armed with double-barrelled shotguns (with nine buckshot in each barrel) and forty-five-calibre six-shooters. Three mounted patrolmen, without guns, but carrying two big Colt's revolvers apiece, were constantly riding about the entire place. In the little stone sentry-boxes along the high wall which enclosed the small yard of the "pen" were several expert marksmen, each armed with the finest long-range rifle ever manufactured, with telescope sights, and

good in such hands to bring down a man at eight hundred yards every time. But, despite these desperate odds against them, the unarmed convicts sometimes made a break for liberty. Only a few months before this, fourteen of the worst desperadoes working on the limestone quarries had "jumped" their "walking boss" with rocks and hammers. By almost a miracle he escaped serious injury from their first volley of missiles and saved his revolvers — the object of attack. Despite the ominous cries of "halt" and the click of his six-shooters and a dozen farther guns, three of the party started like goats up the precipitous rock. Two turned back as the buckshot began to patter on the cliff around them, but the third, a gritty murderer, kept on. Under that deadly fire he gained the top of the great gray ridge and looked across into the rocky fastnesses of the great range. In two seconds more he would be out of sight and safe — for he could reach the cañons long before any pursuer. And just then there was a little white puff from the corner watch-tower, away down there in the valley a full thousand yards away; and the mountain echoes caught up and bandied a spiteful "*crack!*" The convict leaped high into the air with a wild shriek, and fell back dead upon the sunny rocks.

For the unpleasant experiences of the morning

the later hours fully repaid; and among the glories of the Grand Cañon of the Arkansaw I forgot all about stripes and stone-hammers. It is a very small cañon beside some I have seen; but a very noble and imposing one, with a savage grandeur all its own. For nine miles the wild little river seethes over the granite debris at the bottom of a gloomy chasm it has cut through the Rocky Mountains. As the range rose on the slow upheaval of the inner fires, the tireless stream kept carving, chiselling, gouging, polishing, with the flinty tools itself had brought for unknown miles; and when the flat strata had changed to a contorted sierra, the rugged channel kept its place far down toward the level of the outer plains. The mountains beetle 3000 feet above the howling torrent, usually inaccessible slopes, but sometimes in savage cliffs which overhang the very stream. About midway of the cañon is the famous Royal Gorge, with sheer walls a thousand feet in air. The Denver and Rio Grande Railway, bound for Salt Lake, follows the river through this whole wild pass; and in the Royal Gorge hangs to the vertical cliff by great iron rods and A-shaped spans.

After exploring the cañon from end to end I returned to Cañon City, resumed my rifle, and struck off by a little trail into the Greenhorn Mountains in quest of game. The range gets its

name not from the pervasive tenderfoot, but from the famous Comanche chief Cuerno Verde, or Green Horn, whom the Spaniards encountered there in the last century. The striking miners of Coal Creek were just then scouring the country and killing even the bluejays to stave off starvation; so my hunt was fruitless. Nightfall caught me away up in the Wet Mountains without food or shelter. Just as I was preparing, however, to dig a hole and crawl in out of the cold I spied a little cabin on the next hill, and was soon there. No one was at home; but the door was unlocked, and the pick, gold-pan, and drills told me that the owner was a miner — and so that the house was free to use by a stranger. No provisions were discoverable, but I had about a peck of shrivelled wild plums in my pockets, and they made a very good supper before a roaring fire of the fragrant cedar. The one window of the one room was merely a hole in the wall; and on the rafter above my head the miner's six ancient hens sat in a dumpy row. It had been a hard day; and after supper I rolled myself in the tattered blankets of my unaware host and soon fell asleep before the mud fireplace.

Along in the night a great uproar overhead brought me to my feet in sleepy alarm. By the dying coals I could see two savage eyes above me,

glowing weirdly. There are still people who talk soberly of wild beasts' eyes that *shine* in utter darkness — as though there were such a thing as phosphorescent eyes! That, of course, is a fable — no animal's eyes shine except by reflection of some other light, any more than the moon could shine if the sun were quenched. Many a time I have *felt* wild eyes which I could not see, and when I would have given a great deal to be able to locate the invisible danger prowling in the black night about me.

But now I was not stopping to ponder whether those two spots of uncanny yellow glowed with their own or with a borrowed light. The one present proposition was that they were eyes, and that behind them was some wild beast. It must be a cat of some sort, — nothing else could have got up to the rafters, — and some unpleasant recollections of former encounters with its kind made me unwilling to give it the first chance to strike.

My rifle stood in a corner; but the ponderous Remington was at my belt, and I "turned loose" into the darkness about those two little balls of angry fire. There was a blood-curdling screech and something came crashing to the floor and began scrambling toward the window, evidently crippled. I pulled the trigger again, but there was only a dull click — the wantonly beheaded

magpies of my afternoon's careless practice were avenged.

But a forty-four makes a terrible shillalah; and with the crazy zeal which at times catches the least courageous hunter, I clubbed it and "waded in." It was rather a one-sided fight, for those blows would have felled a horse. Once the plucky brute caught the butt in his teeth and raked my duck coat with his cruel claws; and both, as the novelists say, "will carry the scars to their dying day." At last a lucky whack settled my unseen foe, and I blew up the fire for light on the subject. It was a wildcat, as I suspected — but *such* a wildcat! Though he was now dead as Adam, his size actually terrified me. Had I dreamed of his proportions I would have crawled up the chimney sooner than face him. One who has scraped an intimate acquaintance with the bob-cats and lynxes of the Maine forests, hardly cares for a hand-to-hand struggle with a cat of twice their size, and I had not then learned that the Rocky Mountain variety, though far larger, is far more cowardly. With his long, milk-white teeth, his needle-pointed sickles of claws, and his marvellous agility and muscularity, this fellow could have cleaned out a room full of men, armed how you will, had he known his talents. My bullet had broken his right fore leg at the shoulder, and the first crack over his head with that trip-

hammer of a revolver practically settled the question. He brought me supper as well as excitement, for he had killed a hen. I cleaned and cooked the aged bird, and chewed her tough tissues till nearly daylight. As for the cat, I "packed" him some ten miles on my shoulders next day for the sake of weighing him; and a rancher's scales showed him up at fifty-three and a half pounds. His beautiful mottled hide still serves me as a rug.

The night following, I slept at a little ranch-house in a lonely cañon of the Greenhorn range. I do not remember the name of the white-haired, blind old mother there, but her politics will never slip my recollection. After the humble breakfast in the morning she had us all upon our knees, and uttered a prayer which I fancy no campaign since has duplicated. You must remember that it was a fortnight after the presidential election of 1884, and the result was still in doubt. After praying for mankind in general, and with a gentle motherliness for the stranger within their gates, she went on solemnly: —

"We do not know yet, O Lord, how the tide of our country's affairs has turned, *but we fear those nasty Democrats have seized the reins of government.* But we beseech thee, great Ruler, that if it be consistent with thy will, Mr. Blaine may be our President, and that wicked man Cleveland be rebuked!"

In these mountains I saw from a distance the famous Bassick mine — a characteristic example of the irony which mocks the fortune-seeker. Years ago a poor fellow, whose eternal ill-luck would have discouraged Job, sank a big shaft there, and left his last nickle at the bottom. He never got a cent out; and drifted off into the farther mountains, never to return. In the little camp was a penniless fellow who pottered around here and there on fruitless prospecting tours; while his brave little wife kept the pot at a boil by taking in washing. One day he strolled into the deserted mine. The frosts of two winters had been gnawing the walls, and here and there had "stoped down" big patches. The wanderer idly dug his pick into the wall and pried out a yellow nugget half as big as his fist. The luckless first owner had burrowed within six inches of the richest "lead" in Colorado; and who should find the treasure but pauper Bassick! That afternoon he refused $100,000 for his claim, and before long the Bassick mine was "stocked up" at two millions and a quarter.

Getting back to the railroad fifteen miles west of Pueblo, I found adversity. It was late at night, bitter cold, and my clothing was wet from fording the river. A couple of American houses refused to open to me, fearing a "hold up," and I should have frozen but for the kindness of some rough,

ignorant Italian laborers who occupied an open, stoveless box car. One of them, after talking with me awhile, said: "Me no hava except three blanket — give-a you two" — and so he did, himself crawling in between two companions to keep from freezing. It was the first time I had met churlish treatment, and the simple humanity of my unknown Italian friend shone in creditable contrast with the coarse selfishness of "his betters."

It was section supper time as I strode up to the section-house at San Carlos, and the men were just lifting the hand-car from the track. A beautiful young greyhound flew out at me savagely; one of the laborers gave him a curse and a lift with his heavy brogan. The dog had been left there friendless at the death of his master. If I wanted him I could have him. Of course I wanted him; he was too young and handsome and spirited to be left to the abuse of those two-legged brutes. How little I dreamed then what that careless mercy meant — of the pleasures, the privations, and the deadly dangers we were to go through together, this slender black dog and I; or of the awful experience that was to mark our parting, and leave with me some of the brightest and some of the saddest memories of a crowded life.

He was wild as a deer, used only to starvation and brutal blows, but a fine specimen of his blood.

It was a scant and dirty supper that evening, but I saved half of it in a paper and came out to begin my fight for friendship. Starved as he was, it took an hour's patient diplomacy to lure him into the bunk-house, where we presently established a trembling confidence. Next morning the men helped me to catch and tie him after a wild mêlée, in which several of us were bitten, and then I had an hour of real battle before he would lead — now holding the rope against his frantic struggles to escape, and now swinging off his savage and despairing rushes at me. At last his dog-sense triumphed, and he followed peaceably but shivering. "Shadow" was his name thenceforth, and he was the truest shadow that ever followed. Two hours later he did me the only ill-turn of his faithful young life. Coming around a spur I found myself within a hundred feet of four fat antelope. But just as I pulled trigger, Shadow saw them too, and made a terrified leap aside. His cord was tied to my wrist, and he jerked the rifle so that the ball struck a hundred yards from aim. I had still time to drop one or two of the antelope as they ran straight from me, but doubly frightened at the report, the poor pup kept up such a dancing and howling at the end of his rope that I had to give it up. And so, empty-handed and footsore, we came late to the town of Spoons — the Mexican hamlet of Cucharas.

VI

OVER THE DIVIDE

Scaling the Rockies. — The Trapper in Buckskin. — Looking down the Muzzle of a Forty-four. — A Starving Feast on Prairie-dog. — Chased by a Cougar. — Shooting around a Corner.

For more than fifty miles I had been walking without apparent effect straight at two great blue islands that rose from the level distance of the plains. They were the Spanish Peaks, lonely and glorious outposts of the superb Sangre de Cristo range. Under their shadows we stepped into a civilization that was then new to me — that of the swarthy Mexicans and their quaint adobe houses, with regiments of mongrel curs and flocks of silken-haired Angora goats. I was very suspicious of the people,— a foolishness which long subsequent dwelling among them removed,— and Shadow shared my distrust of the much more numerous canine population. We steered clear of all the houses, and several times went hungry for our

folly. Why is it that the last and most difficult education seems to be the ridding ourselves of the silly inborn race prejudice? We all start with it, we few of us graduate from it. And yet the clearest thing in the world to him who has eyes and a chance to use them, is that men everywhere — white men, brown men, yellow men, black men — are all just about the same thing. The difference is little deeper than the skin.

In Colorado the Mexicans are much in the minority, and are frequently nicknamed "greasers" — a nomenclature which it is not wise to practise as one proceeds south, and which anyway is born of an unbred boorishness of which no Mexican could ever be guilty. They are a simple, kindly people, ignorant of books, but better taught than our own average in all the social virtues — in hospitality, courtesy, and respect for age. They are neither so "cowardly" nor so "treacherous" as an enormous class that largely shapes our national destinies; and it would be a thorn to our conceit, if we could realize how very many important lessons we could profitably learn from them. I speak now from years of intimate, but honorable, personal acquaintance with them — an acquaintance which has shamed me out of the silly prejudices against them which I shared with the average Saxon. I know their good and their bad; I know the taste of their

midnight buckshot as well as can any man of penetrable tissues; but the individual is not the race — and the Mexican race is worthy every manly man's respect.

But now they were very new to me, and very suspicious, and their quaint plazas were full of interest. The first we encountered was on the willowy banks of Cucharas Creek. It was a village in one piece — a long, rambling, many-roomed shed of apparent mud, ten feet high, and several hundred in length. The building was what is technically known in the Southwest as a *jacal*, as contradistinguished from the commoner and firmer house built of sun-dried adobe bricks in regular masonry. The jacal is made by setting a palisade around the space desired to be housed, roofing it with poles, straw, and dirt, and chinking the cracks between the upright logs with adobe mud.

After a day's plodding through the little valley lined with the flat Mexican settlements, we started early one icy morning to scale the backbone of the continent, a few miles south of Veta Pass. There were thirteen miles of very precipitous climbing, and toward the top of Middle Creek Pass we came near congealing as the savage wind poured down upon us like an avalanche of ice-water. On the summit of the Rockies we had to wade several miles in the teeth of a fierce snow squall and were

glad enough to get down into the sheltering trough of Wagon Creek. Half way up the mountain I had for the first time released Shadow from his leading string, and he verified his name by tagging along at my heels in solemn gratitude. He was very subdued for a four months' puppy — the shadow of the old brutalities had not yet lifted from his sky, and he crept up to me shivering to enjoy with fear the first caress he had ever known.

It began to look as if we were to sleep out in that pitiless weather. A snowy ermine scurrying across the ice-bound brook was the only token of life. But just at dark we were relieved by seeing the smoke curling from a log cabin against the wooded hillside. The sole occupant, a frayed old prospector, welcomed us cordially; and while he chopped up a dead pine he had dragged down the hill, I cooked supper in the rude adobe fire-place. Good "frying-pan bread," fried pork, coffee, and a can of beans from my pocket, made a feast to which we all did full justice. Then there came a deep mellow voice outside; and in a moment entered a sturdy hunter, clad in fringed buckskin from head to foot.

A wanderer from Plymouth Rock, I decided at once; and so he was. He need hardly have told me — his attentions to the bean-can were enough.

Wide though the Yankee wanders, he never forgets his motto — *Ubi bean, ibi patria.* He was a rarely interesting specimen of manhood, this Lora Washburn; and among the pleasantest memories of the whole tramp are those of the two days passed in his company. Of medium height, a form whose every line bespoke extraordinary strength and agility, a face of manly clearness, a manner quiet and modest, he was good to look at in his picturesque garb, and better still to listen to.

In the morning, after breakfast, we made an inspection of the old man's iron mines — a huge "hogback" sixty feet wide and several hundred yards long of solid, black malleable metal. But here, as everywhere else in the West, was the irrepressible conflict. Whether we met the farmer "under" the great irrigating ditches, or the small cattle-rancher, or the lone prospector, they all had the same story. It was the Western game applied to life — a financial freeze-out. Great companies owned the canals, and most of the crops went for water-rentals. Syndicates bought and fenced the rare springs and water-pockets, and the small man's cattle could die of thirst. It is little wonder that to this day there are "fence-cutting" wars on a scale that would astound the East. Land is worth *nothing* in nine-tenths of the Southwest — it is water that counts. The wealthy men who get

a spring command the range sometimes for a thousand square miles — as far as their cattle can rove from water, and get back again alive — and they gird this huge, unbought domain with barbed wire. But the day of the fence is past. I can lead you along fifty miles apiece of more than one fence, lined on the outside with the bleached bones of the poor man's cattle. But the fifty miles of wire have gone down in a night. Their chopped strands lie where they fell; of their posts remains but a line of little ash-hillocks; and they never will be rebuilt! As to the lone miner who "strikes it," he is otherwise "frozen out." In addition to its modest ten cents a mile fare, the railroad erects equally monumental freight-rates — which are a prohibition on the shipping of ore — until the miner gets tired and the railroad gets the mine for a song, and sings it itself. These are no anarchistic fancies, but cold facts in a large part of the West — facts which statecraft would better face manfully than laugh down until some day they shall remedy themselves after the unpleasant fashion of forces that are denied an outlet.

It was still early when Lora and Shadow and I started down the old government trail at a lively pace. He was the only live, real walker I met on the whole long journey, and there was a keen zest in reeling off the frosty miles with such a compan-

ion — and with some of the noblest scenery in the world about us. In front was the lovely San Luis Valley; behind, Veta and its smaller brethren, and at our right the stupendous bulk of Sierra Blanca, tallest and noblest of all Colorado's congress of Titans. As for Shadow, he seemed to feel the exhilaration, too, and kept us in a roar with frantic but unavailing pursuit of his first jackrabbits The weather turned ugly, and a spiteful sleet pelted our faces; but Washburn's modest reminiscences made the way short. Almost before we knew it, we had passed deserted Fort Garland and came in sight of an ancient adobe hut on the banks of Trincheras Creek. Here we met the trapper's brother, a sawed-off Hercules not over five feet in height, but enormously powerful in chest and shoulders. He was sauntering easily along with the king of all antelopes upon his shoulders, as though its one hundred and fifty pounds had been a pillow. We went into camp together, and ate and smoked and talked far into the night, and then rolled off to sleep under the heavy wagon sheet. Around the walls hung queer, round, shield-like affairs, looking worthless enough, but each standing for eight or nine dollars even in that market — for they were all prime beaver-skins. The animal has to be skinned so as to make the pelt circular, in order to preserve its full value; and these furry

disks, some three feet in diameter, are bound to willow hoops to dry. In those days the creek all along those meadows was full of quiet ponds and substantial dams built by these wonderful four-footed engineers. They can generally fell a tree, a foot through, as exactly to the desired line as could any old lumberman, but should the tree chance to fall wrong, they leave it and attack another. I have known no pleasanter days than the many spent in spying upon the work of a beaver colony as the voiceless artisans dam running streams, cut the green clubs for their winter food, or mud-plaster the roofs of their conical lodges with their trowel tails.

Washburn had run away from his Cape Cod home at sixteen, and shipped before the mast on a New Bedford whaler, cruising from Arctic floes to tropic seaweed. Then he was second mate on a San Francisco schooner, and threw up that berth to follow a gold excitement. He was by turns hunter, scout in the deadly Sioux wars of 1876, and miner, and at last with his brother Carroll went to trapping beaver, otter, bear, etc., for pelt or bounty, in the fur season, and mining in the summer. He had lived a good deal more in his thirty-five years than a hundred average existers do in a lifetime, and was as modest about it all as though his most startling adventures had been the common experi-

ence of mankind. One of his bear stories — wormed out of him with considerable difficulty — is illustrative of how hard the professional hunter earns his money.

"I was trapping in the Little Rockies back in 187–," said he, in his deep chest-tones, "and taking out a good many beaver. One day I wounded an old she grisly, breaking her fore paw, but didn't get her. Two or three days later, I ran across her den in a deep cañon — a sort of natural cave. At its mouth the hole was too low to walk into, and I had to crawl in on hands and knees; but a few feet along it opened up into a high chamber. Away at the far end, something like forty feet from me, I could see where the nest was, down a few feet below the general level of the cave; but the brutes were lying low, growling away in the dark, and wouldn't come out. Presently a cub lifted his head above the edge of the nest. I was waiting for him, and he fell back with a ball through his brain from my buffalo gun — a Sharpe, fifty calibre, and one hundred and twenty-five grains of powder. By and by up came another cub, and down he went; and then another. But the old she wouldn't raise, but kept close, growling among her dead like distant thunder. I threw rocks in on her, and she would snarl and move, but never expose her head. At last I got sick of that and thought to myself, 'Well, old

girl, if you won't come my way I'll have to come yours.' So I stuck my pine torch in a crack above my head, and stood up on my feet. Then I could see into the nest, but it was just a mass of fur, and I couldn't tell t'other from which, for the old one had her head down among her cubs. Well, I couldn't afford to wound her, and it wasn't a very rich light to shoot by, but I was bound to have her. So I threw the cocked rifle to my shoulder with my right hand, and with the left tossed a boulder into the nest. I saw the great head lift slowly from the mass and wave from side to side in ugly style, and before it could drop back there was a chunk of lead buried in it, and I was flying down the cañon. Finding that she didn't follow, I went back to the hole and crawled in, clutching the old Sharpe tightly. But it wasn't much fun to tackle that nest. All was quiet in it, but that didn't signify anything. A wounded bear is a devilish brute, and a foxy one, and nothing was likelier than that she was just laying for me. So I stood there for quarter of an hour chucking over into that nest the biggest rocks I could get hold of, always with the rifle at a ready. Then, as there was no stir, I ventured up and found them all stone dead — the old she and three cubs, and dragged them out into the cañon. Yes, she was a pretty big one — nigh onto ten hundred." That is one of the stories Lora told

me by the dancing firelight, as simply and unaffectedly as if it had been a trifle. It was impossible to look into the narrator's clear, manly eyes and doubt the truth of a word. It seems a pity, anyhow, that we get into this habit of deeming every man a liar just because he has seen and done more in the world than our narrow lives take in. It does not follow, simply because we are timid stay-at-homes, in a tame country, that every one else has had as dull an existence as ours.

Leaving the two manly trappers next morning with hearty regret, Shadow and I tramped off across the plains, suffering much from the cacti, which filled the poor dog's feet with their agonizing needles and kept me busy relieving his involuntary pincushions. At Alamosa we regained the railroad and found a landlord who charged me full hotel rates for Shadow. It is pleasant to remember that he may still be charging; for in the short argument which followed the presentation of his bill, my logic was prior and therefore convincing.

Here we crossed the Rio Grande, there a beautiful mountain stream, unspoiled by the roily rivers and irrigating ditches of its lower course. A few miles south I found great areas peppered with curious volcanic pebbles, among which I gathered many beautiful nuggets of moss agate and chalcedony, with five poor opals. This interesting sort

of gravel spoiled speed; and we were two days in getting twenty miles to Antonito. There I sat down in the telegraph office to catch up with my correspondence. A sudden disturbance caused me to look up. A big, well-dressed man stood four feet from me; and in front of him was a short, tough-faced desperado shoving the cold muzzle of a forty-four under his nose, and cursing him with indescribable fluency. The big man, who was white as a sheet, did not look to me thick enough to stop a bullet at such short range; and the hundred-ton cannon I have seen never looked half as big or ugly as that miserable blue-steel bore which was peering straight at me. I felt sure that if that horny finger put a hair's weight more upon the trigger the big man was not the only one who would get hurt. I have sometimes had to look these gift-horses in the mouth, but it is different when they are personal — there is an endurable excitement then. But it is always a doubly unsatisfactory business intercepting other people's messages; and in this punctilious country should be particularly avoided. I didn't know the fellow; and if I were to go to stopping bullets which were not meant for me, he might take it as an impertinence. So, sooner than meddle, I modestly sidled out of range; while the gentleman with the advantage continued his exhortation. "You'll do me up, will you?" he reiter-

ated. "I've heard what you talked about me. You lie — you did! I've got a good mind to kill you anyhow, just for luck. Yes" — as the victim moved as if for the weapon I could see bulging his coat-tails — "you make a break to pull on me, and I'll pump enough lead into you to patch a mile of hell!"

But at last the big man begged off so piteously that he was allowed to depart on an opportune train; and the aggressor disappeared across the street. "Who's the man with the gun?" I asked the quiet agent.

"Him? Oh, he's Meyers. Keeps yan saloon. He's constable — been constable four years now."

"Guess he didn't want to shoot very bad?" I ventured, feeling much better since emerging from temporary retirement.

"Don't you fool yourself! Meyers'd jest as soon shoot as eat. He's killed more'n one — that's what he's constable fer. We hef' to hev' a pretty tough man fer constable down yer. Ef Dalton hadn't 'a' kep' up his hands, you'd 'a' seen some fun — but Meyers couldn't shoot no man with his hands up."

My sleeping-bag on the board floor of the "hotel" was my bed that night, and my pebble-laden duck coat my pillow; while two other guests divided their night-long attention between me and their

delirium tremens. With the exception of their ravings the accommodations were a fair sample of what I was to have in seven cases out of ten through the fifteen hundred remaining miles of the tramp.

Five miles south of Antonito stands the stone post which marks the State line, and with one step beyond it we were upon the there unprepossessing soil of New Mexico. The whole country was now wildly volcanic, blanketed with great lava flows and strewn with lava blocks. A bitter head wind buffeted us all day, filling eyes, nostrils, and lungs with the fearful alkali dust which makes life a burden. Thirty miles of that sort of thing made a hard day's work, and we were more than content to reach the lone section-house at No Agua ("No Water").

The ground was lost under six inches of snow when we rose in the morning, and the storm continued savagely all day. By night it was hard wading, and we were pretty well tired out by the time we reached Servilleta — so the railroad spells it; it should be Cebollita. The snow largely left us next day, and in the afternoon I wounded a deer by a snap shot. We followed his blood-dotted trail for ten miles and then had to give it up. Cold, famished, without food or water, night not far, but the nearest house fifteen miles away, I

began to anticipate a sorry night. By the greatest good luck, a belated prairie-dog sat upon his burrow to watch us, and a ball cut off his head. We got back at last to the railroad, where I found a battered powder-can, and with snow from a shady ravine parboiled my game therein, afterward roasting him at a camp-fire. He was rank, and covered with greasewood ashes, but no meal ever tasted sweeter to me — and Shadow was equally pleased with his share. That gave us strength to push on to Barranca, where a late but hearty supper at the section-house — which, as at most of these places, comprised the entire "town" — fully revived us. There was glorious moonlight, and despite the hard pull of the day I decided to keep on to Embudo, seven miles below. Just south of Barranca the track suddenly pitches off the edge of the high plateaus, and for eight miles tumbles down a winding cañon with a grade of two hundred feet to the mile. We trotted swiftly and in high spirits down the steep slope, now in the clear moonlight, and now in deep shadow. But just as my ears caught the hoarse roar of the boulder-fretted river to the bottom of whose wild gorge we were fast coming, my spirits and my poise were simultaneously upset by Shadow, who bolted between my very legs from behind. When I recovered my feet and looked back for the cause of his fright I saw that he had

"come into camp" none too soon. Twenty feet behind us a huge mountain lion was crouching in the middle of the track. I could even hear his long tail thumping against the ties. The rifle went to my shoulder like lightning; but there in the darkness of the deep cut I could not even see the sights. It was one of the hardest moments I ever went through — not for fear, for I knew the great brute would not attack me unless cornered; but because here was the game I wanted most of all and every drop of hunter blood in me was tingling for him. But it was a thousand to one against a fatal shot in that light; and once wounded, I needed no telling what he would do. For what seemed hours I stood with finger trembling on the trigger; and then the great cat gave a frightful leap up the side of the cut, and disappeared in the bushes. But poor Shadow, who had been whining and cowering against me in mortal terror, did not easily forget that shock, and all the night upon the rough plank floor at Embudo he moaned and shivered in my arms.

For several miles below Embudo ("the funnel") the Rio Grande pours through a curious, narrow little cañon which fully justifies its name, and then glides out into a pretty, widening valley, dotted with frequent and contented Mexican plazas of a very different type from those we had seen in Colorado.

There were wee peach orchards and tiny gardens, each inclosed by a breast-high adobe wall, and neat adobe houses under the giant cottonwoods, and cattle and burros grazing the brown meadows, and primitive little mills, and now and then there came the greaseless shriek of old carretas — clumsy carts whose wheels were carved in one block from cross-sections of huge sycamores, and without hub, spokes, or tires.

In front of one of these quiet hamlets I met a gambler-looking fellow driving two handsome horses to a buckboard. He was well-dressed, fat, and evidently full of coarse good humor with himself and the world. He pulled up and began to quiz me in an impudent way that made my fingers grow warm, though I held my temper.

"Say, pardner," he chuckled, "thet blunderbuss o' yourn don't look like 't 'd shoot nothin'. Wot'll you take fur it?"

"Oh," I answered carelessly, but resenting the slur on a trusty weapon, "I'll trade even for your mouth — that ought to kill at a mile, and the rifle's good for only five hundred yards."

"Sorto' smart to-day, ain't yo'? Tell yo' wot I'll do. I'll put up this yer hat inside o' fifty yards, and bet yo' a dollar yo' can't hit it fr'm whar yo' stand."

By this time I was getting warm enough to pick

him up at his own game, and retorted, "Done! Put up your hat."

He took off his handsome new silk "tile," walked forty yards or so toward the river, and set it down —behind the stump of a big cottonwood. "Shoot away, Cap!" he laughed maliciously. I was literally "stumped," and was just about to give in when a glitter over against an adobe wall caught my eye.

"Say, how many shots will you give me from here?"

"Oh, all yo' want," he chuckled.

I marked the spot, walked over to the adobe and picked up the steel plough which had attracted my attention. Carrying it past the now puzzled sharper, I set it down beside the stump, turning the share up at what I guessed to be about the proper angle. My new acquaintance now saw the point and made a vigorous protest. He was going down to remove the hat; but the rifle was in my hands, and I convinced him that as he had had his laugh it would not be wise to interfere with mine. I came back to the mark, took careful aim and fired —no score. Twice I went down and shifted the plough, always keeping the rifle in hand—for the gambler had a very unpleasant look, and there was a tell-tale lump under his coat. The third ball struck the curving share midway, glanced along its polished surface, and in a flattened mass struck

that $12 hat amidships, and made an utter wreck of it.

"Now," I said to the discomfited sharper, "I don't want your dollar, for I think you stole it. But let me give you a pointer. Next time you go fishing for suckers, don't throw your hook in Yankee waters."

"I'll be blanked if I do, young feller," he exclaimed bitterly; and in five minutes he was gone in a cloud of dust, the tatters of the hat on his pomatumed head.

With pleasant stops at here and there a hospitable Mexican house — for I was losing my imbecile suspicions — we came at last to Española, then the end of the miserable little narrow-gauge railroad. Here we crossed the Rio Grande on a crazy bridge; and after seven miles down the valley came to the pretty Pueblo Indian town of San Ildefonso, where we were very courteously treated by old Alonzo, governor of that strange little aboriginal republic, and slept on wee wool mattresses upon the adobe floor in the midst of the Indian family.

VII

THE LAND OF THE ADOBE

Among the Pueblos. — The Hero-missionaries and their Work. — Lost on the Mesas. — Ancient Santa Fé. — Miles of Gold-thread. — A Romantic History. — Indian Letter-writers. — The Village of Tesuque.

It pleases me to remember how that, my first introduction to the Pueblo Indians, impressed me; for now I have lived for four years among them in one of their own houses, in one of their own towns, and with them as my almost sole neighbors, and they seem like lifelong friends. But then they were new to me in every detail, and it filled me with astonishment to find Indians who dwelt in excellent houses, with comfortable furniture and clean beds, and clothing and food; Indians who were as industrious as any class in the country, and tilled pretty farms, and had churches of their own building, and who learned none of these things from us, but were living thus before our Saxon forefathers had found so much as the shore of New

England. The old governor, my host, was courtesy itself, and entertained me very ably, though at disadvantage, for my struggles with Spanish in those days were, for grace and comfort, something like the Scottish minister's definition of a "phenomenon": "A cow ye know, and that is not a phenomenon; and an apple tree ye know, and that is not a phenomenon, but when ye see the cow climbing the apple tree, tail first, that is a phenomenon!"

San Ildefonso is one of the smaller pueblos, having but two or three hundred people. It is built in a rambling square of two-story terraced adobes around the plaza and its ancient cottonwoods. The old church and its ruined convent — monuments to the zeal of the heroic Spanish missionaries — doze at the western end of the square, forgetful of the bloody scenes they have witnessed. Here the first pioneers of Christianity were poisoned by their savage flock; and here in the red Pueblo Rebellion of 1680 three later priests were roasted in the burning church. But all that is past. To-day the Indians are peaceful, well-to-do, happy farmers, with broad fields of corn and wheat, beans, watermelons, and squashes reaching along the river, and little fruit orchards about their quiet town; members of the church, and citizens of the United States by the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo

— though that fact seems never to have penetrated the powers at Washington. There is an equally dense popular ignorance as to the Spanish doings in the beginning of the New World, and particularly the beginning of the United States. Our partisan histories, even our encyclopedias, are either strangely silent or as strangely biased. They do not seem to realize the precedence of Spain, nor the fact that she made in America a record of heroism, of unparalleled exploration and colonization never approached by any other nation anywhere. Long before a Saxon had raised so much as a hut in the New World, or penetrated a hundred miles from the coast, the Spanish pioneers had explored America from Kansas to Cape Horn, and from sea to sea; and had, far inland, a chain of Spanish cities five thousand miles long! We talk of the cruelty of the Spanish conquests; but they were far less cruel than the Saxon ones. The Spaniard never exterminated. He conquered the aborigine and then converted and educated him, and preserved him — with a scholarship, humanity, and zeal of which, to our shame be it said, our own history does not furnish the hint of a parallel. The proof is in living flesh and blood. If we ever reach as humane and honorable an Indian policy as Spain has maintained firmly for three hundred and fifty years, it will be a most creditable national achievement.

Among the most striking chapters of the real American history which I hope to live to see in print (for we have none now); a history which shall be able to grasp the fact that the American continent has a heart as well as an Atlantic cuticle; which shall realize that there is a West, and was one long before there was an East; which shall so far escape the ignorance of prejudice as to admit the fact that the Anglo-Saxon played a very squeaky second fiddle in pioneering in the New World — in such a history there will be no more thrilling record than that of the now unwritten heroism of the Catholic missionaries to the Southwest. Heroism outside my creed is just as heroic as heroism within it; and it must be a very bigoted and narrow-gauge Christian or free thinker who cannot admire that absolutely unparalleled story of devotion, of dauntless courage, superhuman endurance, and boundless faith. No other church ever made such a record as that which Rome has carved in the flinty bosom of the Southwest. The labors of Father Junipero Serra and other Franciscans on the coast, nearly a couple of centuries later, were heroic, but in no way comparable to the incredible achievements of the devoted *frailes* who penetrated and subdued the incomparable deserts of the Southwest with their ferocious savage tribes.

It was a Spanish priest who discovered New

Mexico and Arizona, a long, long lifetime before an Anglo-Saxon had so much as seen the coast of the United States; and long before the Pilgrim Fathers held services on the shore of New England, Catholic fathers were converting dusky congregations in little mud chapels in the very heart of the continent. In heroism and devotion they ranked with the early martyrs; and too frequently, too, in their sufferings. Hundreds of them watered the bare, brown soil with their blood. In one day alone, in the red insurrection of 1680, twenty-one priests were butchered by the swarthy insurgents, in nearly as many localities in New Mexico. The main line of Spanish colonization was of course along the valley of the Rio Grande; but the padres were everywhere. Unarmed and alone they penetrated to the Moqui pueblos, three hundred miles west; to Zuñi, to Acoma, and established the lonely missions. They had a different people to deal with from those whom Serra found in California in 1759 — a wild, savage-hearted, treacherous race of idolaters. They built no such noble piles as our coast missions; but their box churches of stone and adobe were part of a grander monument, of which with more than its classic pertinence may be said, "If you seek their monument, look around you." They have left their indelible impress in every nook of the most unpromising field on earth; their stamp

is still upon its customs, its language, and its religion. And it was no ephemeral zeal. The history of the Roman church in New Mexico is the history of the country for a third of a millennium. They did more to conquer the Southwest than did the Spanish soldiery. Where there was one battle there were ten thousand prayers and exhortations; for every fort there were a score of churches. And while the military influence of Spain in what is now the United States lies forgotten under the dust of centuries, its religious influence is the ruling power to-day in an enormous area.

From San Yldefonso to Santa Fé is less than thirty miles, but it gave me a hard day. A Mexican, evidently misunderstanding my jargon, directed me south instead of east; and as the trail was dim and crossed by and branching into countless others, I soon found myself at a loss in the wilderness. All day long we wandered over the gravelly mesas, suffering torture from thirst, for I had brought no water, and not a little from hunger. Shadow came to appreciate the unpleasant situation, and every now and then howled dolefully. At last, at eight o'clock at night, just as I was deciding to dig a hole in the sand and crawl in for the night, a dim light far ahead made me throw my hat aloft and whoop like a Comanche. An hour later Shadow and I were seriously lowering the water of a well

at the first house in Santa Fé, and in a few minutes more were in the hospitable clutches of friends, after a painful walk of forty-two miles with a heavy load, for I had brought my knapsack all the way from Española.

Quaint old Santa Fé interested us much — me, because it is the most curious town in the country which is shared by Americans, and Shadow, because it was the first real town he had ever been in. He revelled in the narrow old streets, in the vehicles, in the burros with their kidney-shaped loads of wood, and, above all, in the market, where hung meat plenty, and even jackrabbits. It was very difficult to convince him that these tempting displays were not for his special benefit, and particularly the first jackrabbits that he had seen so tame that he could actually catch them. We were there eight days, travelling about a great deal and finding many interesting things. The possibilities of the adobe surprised me, for there we found handsome residences and creditable four-story buildings made of the despised "mud brick." It was very interesting, too, to watch the Mexican workmen turning gold and silver bars into miles of precious wire, and winding that, in turn, into the exquisite and intricate patterns of their characteristic filigree jewelry.

Santa Fé was founded in 1605 by Juan de Oñate,

the colonizer and first governor of New Mexico. There was long a contention that it antedated St. Augustine, Florida; but history is as conclusive on this point as on the year of Waterloo. St. Augustine was founded in 1560, and was the first Caucasian town in the United States. The second was San Gabriel de los Españoles, now Chamita, which I had passed just before reaching Española. Oñate founded this in 1598. The third was Santa Fé, 1605.

There are a great many other fables about Santa Fé, now exploded by scientific research, but still current; but the truth is romantic and interesting enough. The "oldest church in America" dates only from 1710, the original church having been destroyed in the rebellion of 1680. There are many older churches here in New Mexico; but for all that, the old church of Santa Fé is a valuable historic building. The "oldest house in America," just back of this church, is not half so old as some other houses in New Mexico; but the tourist cannot so easily see them, and this is really a very old building, perhaps older than any in the East. The adobe "Palace" is similarly broidered with vague fables; but though it is not an old building at all, it stands on historic ground.

The early history of Santa Fé was full of romance and danger. Its most thrilling chapters were those

of the Pueblo rebellion. In 1680 the swarming Indians besieged the place. Governor Otermin and his handful of men fought long against the overwhelming odds, and finally carved their way through the savages and retreated to El Paso.

In 1693 Diego de Vargas, the generous and brave reconqueror, stormed Santa Fé, and took it away from the Pueblos; but they had destroyed the Spanish buildings, and, worst of all, the archives.

The quaint old town, instinct with the romance of two hundred and seventy-five years, is well worth detailed inspection, but I need not go into details here. It has often been described, and is easy to be seen for one's self. This is not a guide-book, but the record of a walk and of some of the salient points which struck the walker — the random impressions of then, recounted by the light of later study and intimate acquaintance.

The characteristic industry of Santa Fé is the manufacture of Mexican filigree. It is very interesting to watch — as any one is welcome to do — the various processes through which the precious metals must pass ere they emerge in the shape of that wonderful jewelry which is so widely renowned. In the showcases you may see countless bracelets, chains, napkin rings, card-holders, card-cases, earrings, breastpins, hair combs, and other articles in gold and silver, composed of the most

exquisite, dainty, and complicated designs — slippers, scrolls, mandolins, guitars, butterflies, grasshoppers, flowers of all sorts, fish, and everything else that ingenuity can devise. And each article is made by the innumerable twistings of wires as delicate as a hair. The gold or silver is melted from coin in a crucible, and cast in an ingot about twelve inches long and half an inch in diameter. This is repeatedly passed between powerful steel rollers in slots of graduated size, and at every passage becomes slenderer and longer. Then it is taken to still finer rolls, and pressed and pressed again, until the once ingot has become a scarcely visible wire, thousands of feet in length. A few yards of this — as much as can conveniently be handled — is then doubled, and the loop placed on a rapidly revolving hook, while the operator holds the ends. Thus is soon formed a double twisted wire. This is put through a smooth roll, and comes out a tiny flattened wire, the two edges being beaded of course, wherever the two strands have crossed each other. This beading process is necessary to give an edge that will hold. Meantime the artistic German foreman has drawn a leaf or a scroll; a Mexican workman takes some heavier wire and makes a frame of the shape designed; and then, catching the end of the beaded wire, proceeds to fill his frame. He has a little brass-

covered affair which looks like the bottom of a pocket flask. Along the greatest diameter of its oval base is a row of microscopic teeth; and around these he weaves the beaded wire in and out with intricate twists which no Yankee eye can follow. Thus he arranges the gauzy meshes, which another workman solders into the frame; the frame and others, similarly filled, are joined together until the whole design is complete; the burnisher does his work, and there you have a dream of exquisite beauty which can no more be described than can the most delicate traceries of a frosted window-pane. The mechanical part is all done by Mexican workmen — we are of too impatient blood for such slow pains-taking — but the designing is mostly by American and German artists.

A more interesting ethnologic study is among the Indian scholars of the now numerous special schools in Santa Fé. Whatever thoughtful people may think as to our justification in forcibly taking these citizens of the United States (for all Pueblo Indians *are* citizens) away from their homes to be given an alleged education, the processes are instructive and full of interest. The adaptability of the Pueblo child to these new conditions is surprising to the average visitor. I can best illustrate it by reproducing some of their own letters given me at the time. You must remember that up to the

time of going to school these swart pupils have none of that help from heredity which is such an advantage to our children — who are really half-educated before they begin to be educated at all. But to the letters.

Here is a comically idiomatic one from a young Pueblo whose schooling had lasted but a year. The handwriting is very fair.

"INDIAN SCHOOL,
"ALBUQUERQUE, N. M.

"MY DEAR MAJ. SANCHEZ: I am so glad to see you this morning but when you go home did not said good buy in me Maj Sanchez I think you very good man to take care the Indians Pueblo I guess you know yesterday morning one Ute boy died in the mountains and this morning Mr Loveland go get that died boy

"This afternoon 1st and 5th Div boys worked and I work in the Laundry and other boys work in the new ground make a road and two boys cutting the oats last week San Domingo came down in here he said 28 day more stand here This morning I cut the bread in the kitchen when finished cut bread then put on the table in dining room to eat the boys when ready to breakfirst

"I have learn maps of Aisa and Europ and U S s

"Yesterday great wide blew I think fell down in

the bedroom I am afraid Maj Sanchez and other boys slept and get up afraid some said I think fell down this house Them told boys I said no not fell down just wide blew outside

"When I go home I have much to do in the home work in the garden hoe and then again other garden cut wheat and I have cows to take carry and I have horses and burros and sometime go to Santa Fe I have Fourth Reader now good buy Maj Sanchez

"Your Friend

"FRITZ BRADFORD

"SANTO DOMINGO, N M"

Now I call that an interesting letter, and the description of the cyclone is graphic if not grammatical.

That is one of the poorest of the lot. Here is a good one from a fifteen-year-old boy who had been at school three years.

"MY DEAR MAJ. SANCHEZ: This evening I am going to write you a letter to tell you all about the school. We have not so many boys as we use to have, because all the Sandia boys went home and nearly all the Laguna. But we expect to have more boys and girls the next year, because we are going to have a better house and school than this.

But I think I will not come here to school—I think I better go to Carlisle if my parents let me go, because I want to see the large town and some others interesting things. If you see my parents, please tell them I am well and tell them the time is coming when we all go home, and tell my father that I want to go to Carlisle to school.

"I have been in school only a few days last month and this, because we were working in the new building, we painted the whole building. I had worked 45 days and Mr. Bryan pay me 50 cents a day, and I earn $22.50. I don't know how well you can understand me, because I cannot speak very good English yet. That is all I can write tonight, for it is pretty near bed-time, and we must get ready to go to bed.

"Your friend

"JAMES D. PORTER,

"POJOAQUE PUEBLO, N. M."

Porter's Indian name is Marcos Tapia ("Mark Wall"). The name of his pueblo is pronounced Po-*whack*-y.

From Santa Fé we visited the pueblo of Tesúque, seven miles north — one of the smaller of these Indian town-republics, but one of the easiest of access to the tourist. Its houses are of a now uncommon type, double, two-storied, and terraced

on both sides, half facing to the central plaza, and half to the cold world. Half the roof of the first story forms a porch for the second. In the whole pueblo there was not then a door on the ground floor; and there were but few windows. To get into a lower story, one must climb a ladder to the roof, open a trap-door, and go down another ladder.

The upper houses open by ordinary doors to the roof. All are adobe, small but well made, and have from one to three rooms — generally two. They are whitewashed with gypsum inside, and beautifully neat. In the corner of each room is the comical — but withal incomparably convenient — adobe fire-place, common to all Mexican and Indian houses, and in it stand the knotted sticks of cedar, for in this country wood is always burned upright instead of horizontally. In the hearth, in all probability, you may see sundry rude images of red clay baking, or well-made pottery, of peculiar polish and decoration, and characteristic shape. Now some very excellent travellers from the East buy these fantastic images and take them home as "Indian idols," whereby they become a laughing-stock. These people are hardly more idolaters than we are. They make these "idols" simply to sell to the confiding, and they do sell both by the hundreds. Nor are pottery and earthen dolls their only

resources thereunto. On their walls hang Springfield and Winchester rifles, double-barrelled shotguns, and the like, cartridge belts and reloading tools; but they sell to tourists any quantity of bows and arrows and raw-hide shields, and the tourists carry off the relics as something really used by the "red" men! They pay five or six prices for them, too, for the Pueblos have not been slow to learn from the Jews who trade with them.

I know not why it is; but people who had "good horse sense" back in Boston, New York, or Cincinnati, seem when they get West to be ambitious only to show how foolish they can be.

Now when a Westerner sees anything novel and surprising he takes it all in without moving a muscle. He "always comes downstairs that way." He has learned the *a, b, c* of the *savoir faire* — when in a strange place, to keep his eyes and ears open, his mouth shut. Thereby, he always escapes making a spectacle of himself. If the Easterner in the West would follow this rule, he would be less "filled" with ridiculous stories. The people of the West are not particularly looking for some one to impose upon and tell silly fables to; but they are kind-hearted, and when they see that the tourist will be disappointed unless he is "filled" — as is generally the case — they try to accommodate him.

In every house at Tesúque, as in other pueblos, the visitor will find the cooking arrangements among the chief points of interest. At the side of one of the rooms — usually that also used as a storehouse and granary — is a wooden trough, a foot deep, from three to five feet long, and three wide. In it are fastened from one to three curious rocks, shaped something like a bracket, slightly concave, and sloping from the edge to the bottom of the trough. They are about six inches wide and eighteen long, and weigh fifty to one hundred and fifty pounds apiece. These are the Pueblo *metates*, or hand-mills, and on these, with smaller, oval stones, thin enough to be easily grasped, the women rub down their blue maize into a sweet pulp. This batter is then spread on flat rocks over the fire, and there baked into *guayaves*. Jerked meat — that is, meat cut into thin strips and dried in the sun on lines — hangs on the walls, and there are other provisions stowed away in various corners. A few red earthen cooking-pots, and the brightly painted *tinajas*, or water-jars, a coffee-pot, and some minor accessories complete the outfit.

When you go to visit an American friend of family, the chances are that his young hopefuls may make life heavy. But the Pueblos do not turn loose on you a pack of devastating infants. Go into one of these little "mud huts," and you will see the

baby strapped hand and foot, and wound so about with cloths that it cannot stir. A small board swings from the low rafters by buckskin thongs, and on this board the pappoose lies serene as a summer dream. I have known thousands of tiny Pueblos, and it is one of the rarest things in the world to hear one of them screeching.

VIII

THE MINERAL BELT

The Great Turquoise and its Deserted Drifts. — An Elastic Road. — The Oldest Gold-fields. — Among the Mines. — The Paradise of Land-Grabbers. — My Friend the Desperado. — Mariño and the Fat Man. — The Deadly Crossing. — Lost in the Snow.

Parting with regret from the "ancient metropolis" of New Mexico, whose every nook we had pried into for eight happy days, we turned south and trudged blithely down the long, sloping plateaus. The town had already begun to pall on Shadow, — chiefly, I suspect, because he had me less to himself there, — and he was very antic on taking again to the road. That very afternoon, however, his spirits were sadly snubbed. We came near two preoccupied coyotes which were trying to dig a rabbit from his hole, and Shadow took after them very valorously. The mean little wolves led him off a safe distance from my rifle, and then allowed him to catch up with them —

and how he wished they hadn't! He made a brave fight, but was sorely overmatched, and was glad enough to break away and make back to me, with several unpleasant cuts in his sleek coat.

Passing through the unimportant mining camp of Bonanza and on to Carbonateville, — a town six miles from a drop of water, — we came to the little gray knob of "Mount" Chalchuitl, the only turquoise mine on the continent, except one known only to the Zuñis, and the one prehistoric mine in the whole Southwest, despite the numerous fables of ancient gold there. It was very long ago when the first stone hammer was swung by swarthy fists against those white rocks and thumped out the first little nugget of the stone that stole its color from the sky. The great hill is fairly honeycombed, and on one side is a great hole which could swallow a four-story block without a strain. The Pueblos have always prized the turquoise above all other ornaments, — they had neither gold nor silver in the old days, — and were pecking away with their rude tools at this precious deposit long before Columbus. Some thirty acres are covered with debris from their ancient mines, and upon these dumps great cedars have grown to the maturity of centuries. The tale is gravely printed in histories that the early Spanish conquerors enslaved the Pueblos in this and other mines, and

that part of this mountain caved in and buried a lot of the unfortunate Indians. But this is a silly fable, for the Spanish never enslaved the Pueblos, and were, on the contrary, the most humane neighbors the American Indian ever had — and never worked this or any other mine in New Mexico until very modern times.

We prospected the strange hill for several hours, and I cut my head and knees badly in crawling along a half-filled ancient tunnel for a couple of hundred feet — to the audible discontent of Shadow, who would neither enter the dismal hole himself nor assent to my doing so. A fine stone hammer and some beautiful nuggets of pure azure — very different from the worthless green of most of the veins — rewarded my efforts.

Crossing the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fé Railroad at Cerillos and wading the icy Galisteo, we entered upon the most elastic road of my experience. Unwilling to trust my memory, at this late date, for details of impression, I go back to my letter-book and reproduce what I wrote to friends that night. It may not be scientifically exact, but it covers the experience better than anything I could write now. The letter says: —

". . . Here I was, perplexed by about fifteen different roads branching off in all directions, and had to take one by guess. Meeting a teamster soon

after, I asked him if this was the road to Golden. 'Yes,' said he, 'and you've got a big afternoon's walk before you. Golden's twelve miles from here.' That didn't trouble me, and I tramped three miles up the hills until I met two men in an express. They informed me that I was now fourteen miles from Golden, and on the right road. A mile and a half beyond, two ox-teams loaded with coal hove in sight, and the drivers said, 'Yes, straight road, sixteen miles.' That began to give me a pain, and when I found a man working at a coal bank, a hundred yards further on, I asked him the distance to Golden in a voice that would have drawn tears from a turnip. He mildly but firmly replied that it was just eighteen miles. Then I sat down on a rock and felt of my feet, to see if they hadn't got turned around somehow. A long-bearded bushwhacker came loping along on a little bronco, and to him I appealed: 'Say, Mister, don't impose on an orphan, but tell me how far it is to Golden. If it's fifty miles, just spit it right out, for I want to know the worst. They've been breaking it to me gently all the way, but I want you to tell me the whole bitter truth.' He looked at me compassionately, doubtless thinking me a crank, and told me it was not quite twenty miles to Golden. The conversations occurred exactly as I have reported them. The only thing that puzzles

me is, how they were all so unanimous in sticking on two miles each time. There must have been a conspiracy to impose upon my confidence. The reason none of them knew the distance is, that the road has not been surveyed; but if any of you should ever want to walk it I can tell you that it is just twenty and one-eighth miles — I measured it that fateful afternoon. And mean miles they are — sandy, hilly, and dull. There is some very pretty scenery, too, as your way winds among the rough Ortiz Mountains; but by the time you have climbed ten miles of semi-perpendicular sand, and still have not reached the height of land, the beauties of nature are quoted considerably below par. If it hadn't been for my canteen, filled with muddy water from the vile Galisteo, I never should have got out, for it is *the* dryest road. With every 'snifter' of that water I swallowed a tablespoonful of iron rust and sand, but it tasted sweet as honey. Clear water lacks body anyhow, and iron is good for the system. At last the highest pitch was reached, and Shadow and I started on the long delayed down grade. Just at sunset a young fellow on horseback informed me that it was still two miles to Golden. I hurried on for half an hour and met a Mexican who said Golden was three miles away. But finally, after a mile climb up the wooded hill, I heard the welcome voice of

a big dog, and a moment later caught the dim from a score of windows, and I was in Golden."

It is a unique and interesting camp, this to which we came so tired and hungry on the evening of December 5th — Golden, or the New Placers.

Our twelve days among its mines were of the most enjoyable of the whole journey, though without startling adventures. A miner friend from Ohio took us to his rough little jacal and made us very much at home. After the first two days there came heavy snowstorms and the weather grew very bitter at that altitude of over seven thousand feet, but every day, and all day long, we trudged over the snow-buried mountains with Charlie Smith, poking into the numerous mines and countless prospect holes in their rocky ribs, exploring the underground miles of the great San Pedro copper mine, and gathering whole sacks of beautiful specimens of the brilliant copper ores, and plenty of quartz lumps peppered with yellow gold. Shadow's fear of losing me soon overcame his horror of underground, and he tugged reluctantly at my heels through the drifts and tunnels, and showed his relief by wild capers whenever we got back to the light of day. It was in the placer mines, however, that I found the greatest pleasure, and Shadow the utmost tribulation. The Mexicans who worked these slow but sure-paying

mines — while the more "ambitious" Americans were trying to find fortune by one stroke in the quartz veins — took a great fancy to me, and let me work all I desired on their claims. But whenever I swung down by the rope to the bottom of one of their thirty-foot shafts and crawled out of sight in the drift to scrape up a "prospect" from the pay-streak, Shadow sat on the very brink of the shaft and howled at the top of his voice till I came up again. He was very deeply interested in the subsequent panning-out of the pay-dirt, and never moved from my side during the entire operation, no matter what the temptations of vagrant curs or other excitements. It did not take me long to become expert with rocker and pan, and I have still several little phials of nuggets and "dust" as trophies of my first gold-washing.

Golden is one of the pioneer gold-fields of the United States. The New Placers — so named from the vast areas of auriferous gravel which surrounded the town — have been worked by the Mexicans since 1828, which gives priority over all other workings in this country, except those of Cabarrus County, North Carolina, which were discovered a generation earlier. The history of the brave little town has been made tragic by its connection with an American perversion of a Spanish land grant. People of the East look upon the

Southwestern land grant as a collective swindle and a monstrosity, forgetful that these grants were made by the Spanish Crown in the same way and for the same reasons, and conveying just as valid title as the land grants of England or France upon which the skeptics themselves live. The New Mexican land grant is a perfectly normal and proper institution in itself, and the only trouble about it arises from the frauds practised by some American land pirates. The grant which laps over Golden is a sample of their operations. The original Spanish grant was miles away — a small triangle of a few hundred acres, with its apex pointing west. Under the manipulations of a syndicate successive surveys turned the grant over like the leaf of a book, so that its apex pointed east, and swelled it to 35,000 acres, taking in a very rich mineral country. The syndicate then endeavored to oust the sturdy miners whose claims they had thus suddenly blanketed; but that was another thing, and after years of litigation and occasional resort to arms the miners still hold their own. Most of the land grants in New Mexico are not frauds, and but for our government's shameful disregard of the treaty promises under which it acquired this Territory the matter would have been adjusted long ago. Nothing has been done to settle the question of land titles in the South-

west — a very simple matter, requiring only an investigation to prove what grants are fraudulent and should therefore be thrown out, and what are real and should stand — until within a year; but now a measure has at last been passed by Congress which promises the necessary relief.

So the short American years of Golden have been troublous ones; but they were the moral making of the camp. Most mining towns of the frontier acquire and hold the lawless; but the bitter tribulations of Golden sifted the "stayers" to the solid few. It took *men* to hold the camp through those years of hardship and danger, and men they are every one, tried and not found wanting. It was a hard life through all that bitter struggle — a life of persecution by powerful enemies through venal courts, of perverted law and unperverted lead; when every man and boy packed a six-shooter at his waist, and knew not when his day might come, for more than once the hired assassin's bullet whistled down the lonely cañon. And in those stirring days a black-eyed woman of ninety pounds was editing and issuing alone — while her husband fought the monopoly at its eastern home — the brightest, savagest, most fearless bantam of a weekly newspaper in the West, the long-dead *Golden Retort*. Its incisive editorials are worth reading yet, for their lonely but undaunted defiance

and bitter arraignment of the corrupt power which then swayed the whole Territory.

The most dramatic episode of the "war" was in May, 1883. The monopoly seemed on the point of ousting the prospectors from their rightful claims. But one fine day as the hundred imported operatives of the big copper mine filed out to dinner, eleven quiet men of Golden, decorated with Winchesters and Colts, stepped into the mine and said, "Guess we'd better run this thing awhile now." And they had their way. The laborers were urged to "run them out"; but the laborers could see no profit in playing target at $1.50 per diem. The hardy eleven camped in the mouth of the mine, and held it, despite official threats to starve them out, smoke them out, shoot them out. No one seemed anxious to bell the cat. That capture was in one way conclusive; for though the questions of law have not even yet been settled, the monopolists ceased at last their highwaymen's tactics, and sought and made compromises which were advantageous to both sides. Now capital and the prospector work there side by side, and there is no longer strife to retard the development of those rich, ore-laden ranges. After lying in neglected rust for years, the million-dollar works of the big copper mine are running again; and all is lovely.

One of the first things to strike an observant eye

in a western mining camp is a diagrammatic explanation of the distrust felt in the East toward mining ventures. That so many have been "bitten" in these ventures is very little the fault of the West. There have been some wilful swindles, it is true; but the mountains are there, and the metal is in them; and nine times out of ten the trouble is solely in the methods obstinately clung to by the eastern stockholders. The mine is safely bought, the board of directors safely elected, the stock safely subscribed; and then with the first step out of doors the trouble begins. Instead of placing the practical supervision of the mine in the hands of a miner, it is generally given to an eastern favorite who knows no more of mines, to quote a western simile, "than a pig does of side pockets." And the fearful and wonderful things he does! You can trace his footprints in every camp of the West; and along his trail are generally the bones of the enterprise he bungled to death. To take an example from Golden. One Ohio company, years ago, invested in a ten-stamp quartz-mill to be set up here. The tenderfoot superintendent was a part of the machinery, as usual. Arriving here he turned up his nose at advice, and went his own gait. And what do you imagine he did? Well, not much — except to erect that costly mill several miles up a dry cañon of eternal rock, where water

could not be had by drilling a mile! He seemed ignorant that a stamp-mill cannot be run without water. There the mill was when I came; and agents of the company were begging help from the miners of Golden — help to move the mill a few miles to where it could be operated. Another company expended $750,000 in the laudable scheme to run a fifteen-mile pipe-line from the Sandias to Golden, and thus bring water to hydraulic the enormous areas of gold-bearing gravel. This was all very well; but again the greenhorn manager made his mark. To withstand that enormous pressure he laid six-inch pipe of *sheet-iron!* Of course that papery conduit bursted before it was half full of water. The company's three-quarters of a million turned to yellow rust; and there was an end of it. And so it goes — and the West is abused by the eastern stockholders for their own folly.

And do not make the common eastern mistake of deeming the western man an ignorant desperado, and the western miner a besotted brute like the imported navvies of eastern coal mines. Let me tell you, that in these little prospect holes or down in the developed shafts, picking away at the stubborn veins or tilting the gold-pan, you will find your peers or your betters. Some of these earth-stained, ragged men are better educated

than you or I, and the majority of them are fully as shrewd and fully as honest. These men are not coolies. They are not here as day laborers, toiling for a pittance of some other man's money; but they are men who left perhaps better chances back East than you have now, and came out here to make fortunes. They have no master, and what they have is their own. Perhaps it is only a little hole sunk a few yards into the hard rock; but that hole may mean more money than you ever handled in all your life of business. Of course, on the other hand, it may not be worth a continental cent, but a miner is willing to take his chances.

With the snow more than two feet deep on a level, and a walk of fifty lonely miles to the railroad ahead, the getting away from Golden did not look inviting. But I was getting hungry for mail; and as the snow showed no signs of disappearing, there was nothing to do but wade it. The faithful low shoes — now nearly through their third pair of soles — were not to be given up; but they and the long stockings made slender protection against the drifts, and so I bound up my feet and legs in gunny-sacks, which were lighter and warmer than boots. Had it not been for those ungainly leggins, I never should have got through that awful day; for with boots, even the best, my feet would have frozen.

It was 10.30 of a pleasant December morning when we bade a hearty farewell to our new-found friends in Golden, and started trudging up the long, gentle slope toward the Tijeras ("Scissors") cañon, through the deep snow and with a heavy burden on my shoulders — for I had shipped only the copper and silver specimens to the railroad by stage, and was carrying the gold specimens to pack and ship at Albuquerque. My entire load weighed nearly forty pounds, which is altogether too much even in the best of walking. After a couple of miles we left the well-broken road to San Pedro, and struck off through the scattered piñons south-westwardly. We had now no path save the tracks of a single horse which had been ridden to Carnöe the day before, so we had to break our own way. It was the hardest long walk I ever attempted; and poor Shadow fared no better. The snow came above his belly, so that it was impossible for him to plough any distance; and the only gait by which he could get along was a series of wearisome bounds. In and out among the foothills of the San Ysidro range we wound, breathing hard with the violent labor, perspiring heavily despite the cold, floundering along as best we might through the snow which grew deeper and deeper as we kept gaining a higher altitude. Had I dreamed that it was so bad, I never would have taken that moun-

tainous route, but would have gone to the railroad at Wallace, where the valley is too warm for much snow. But now I did not like to turn back, and determined to break through to Tijeras if possible.

After some five hours of fearful toil, we reached the little creek at the foot of the noble Sandias, and crossed it at a spot which has bloody memories. While in Golden I had become acquainted with the famous desperado, Mariño Lebya, a herculean Mexican of astonishing agility and almost matchless skill with the revolver — one of his favorite pastimes being to spur his fleet horse through a village, shooting off the heads of chickens as he galloped past! He was a known murderer, having slain many men in quarrels or for purposes of robbery, and a perennial horse-thief; but he walked the streets of Golden as freely as any one. There were many warrants out against him, but the numerous officers who came down periodically from Santa Fé to arrest him always took very good care not to find him, nor to let him find them; for whenever he heard of such an official visit he always buckled on his unerring six-shooters and rode into Golden at top speed, to "*see* who would take Mariño." His bravado was endless, and covered no lack of courage. He was ordinarily a good-natured fellow, and I had many very entertaining talks with him without at all suspecting

who he was; but those for whom he conceived a dislike were apt to fare ill. He was a good deal of a joker, and sometimes a very cruel one. A very wealthy and very round eastern man who once came to Golden to buy some mines, doubtless has no difficulty to this day in recalling his first — and last — meeting with Lebya. His negotiations were progressing very favorably, and he had stepped into the shanty saloon to "set 'em up" to a number of miners. Just then the door swung open, and in strode the huge Mexican, his broad, rather handsome face flushed with drinking, and the two unerring six-shooters in his belt. Mariño never liked fat men — they always seemed to irritate him by their rotund sleekness, and at sight of the capitalist his brow clouded. The outlaw spoke excellent English; and stalking up to the stranger he demanded: "Who told you to come here? We don't want fat men here!" The little crowd fell back, and the capitalist's face turned the color of paper as the desperado seized him by the shoulder. He could only stammer, "Wh-what's the ma-matter?"

"I'm Mariño, and I hate fat men," was the reply. "If you're here to-morrow I'll peg you down out here and light a fire on that big stomach" — and leaving the stranger more dead than alive, Mariño went off up street. It is hardly necessary to add

that the capitalist did not wait for that abdominal conflagration. There was no stage, but he would sooner have walked out than spend that night in Golden. He got away somehow; and the —— Mining and Milling Company died thus in its infancy.

But to return to the bank of San Pedro Creek. Some time before my visit, an American doctor coming up from Albuquerque had stopped over night at Tijeras, and had carelessly exposed a considerable roll of money. He rode a fine horse, and had a good revolver. Next morning as he came on toward Golden, Mariño's gang — who had taken a short cut from Tijeras to get ahead — ambushed him at this very crossing. His horse fell at their first volley, crushing his leg beneath it, but he fought bravely, emptying his six-shooter at the assassins, until he fell, heavy with bullets. The outlaws took his valuables and then burned the bodies of horse and rider. For a long time nothing was known of his fate. At last his brother came from the East to make search and finally found his watch in pawn at Bernalillo. By this clew four of the murderers were traced, and an Albuquerque mob left them dangling to four telegraph poles. Mariño, however, escaped, and retribution did not overtake him until three years after I knew him. A Mexican whom he had treated

with great generosity, and upon whose friendship he relied, was bribed to kill him, or to assist a deputy sheriff in doing so. The precious couple met Mariño on the forest road a few miles from Golden, and the always alert outlaw challenged them. "What? Don't you know me?" cried the false friend, riding up with a cordial smile and extending his hand. As Mariño grasped it, the traitor jerked him forward and the cowardly officer put a bullet through Mariño's brain from behind. Had the heavy ball gone through the heart instead of instantly paralyzing the great nerve-centre, there is no doubt that a man of Mariño's force of will would have slain both his murderers before dying himself; and they knew that no mere surprise, however complete, could make them a match for that lightning marksman. Only some such cowardly trap as theirs could have conquered him. Mariño was dearly loved by the common people, to whom he was a very Robin Hood, fleecing only the rich and dividing with the humble; but he was a terror to that whole section, and his death was a relief to the public.

In the ruins of the old church just beyond this fatal crossing I stopped to rest and escape the icy wind, for all my clothing was wringing wet, while Shadow was in a perfect lather. In ten minutes we were on the road again, but with increasing

anxiety. There had been an ominous change in the weather, and sheet-like clouds covered the sky. The wind was rising, too; and suddenly I saw, with a thrill of terror, that a few finer particles of the dry snow were beginning to blow northward. That may seem a circumstance too trivial to mention at all, but I knew it was a matter of life or death. We were in a trackless wilderness, far from help, or food, or warmth, and with no more than the remotest idea in what direction they lay; night near at hand, and a deadly chill in the air, and our only guide to safety the footprints of a horse. In ten minutes my fears were realized. The wind took sudden strength, and came shrieking savagely down the valley, scooping up great sheets of the snow-flour and whirling it hither and yon in blinding volleys. The footprints, upon which our lives might depend, drew dimmer, faded, were wiped out altogether. I pulled my hat over my eyes, shut my teeth, and plunged desperately and blindly on in the general direction of the now obliterated trail. It was a fearful struggle against that head-wind, through the snow. Presently Shadow crouched under a spreading piñon, whose piny boughs kept off the storm, and howled dismally. I called to him, and then walked on, thinking that the poor fellow would surely follow; but he was too worn out, and only howled the

louder and did not budge. I went back to him, put my knife-belt around his neck, and led him. For perhaps a mile he did his best to come on, but then he could keep his feet no longer, and could only be dragged limp and helpless as a dead body. That would not do — the strap would choke him. Deadly as the danger was I could not desert him — dear Shadow, who had come to seem more like a brother than a dog, in our long and lonely walk together. I picked him up and threw him upon my heavy knapsack, his legs on either side of my neck, and carried him as one carries a sheep. And then I began to lose all hope. My load was crushing, the drifts grew more impassable, the wind more cruel. It was already several degrees below zero. Down my legs and body trickled rivulets of sweat; and my outer clothing, sweat-soaked for hours, was now frozen stiff. We were off the road, too, and in a rough country, cut every few rods by deep arroyos running to the creek. These were drifted full; and a hundred times I tumbled into them without warning, cutting and bruising us both cruelly, the fine snow sifting down my back and chilling my strength; floundering out again only by the energy of despair, and struggling on only to fall into another trap. My strength was gone. The endurance which had never failed before, though often sorely tested, was at an end. Nothing

but "bulldog" kept me up. I knew that to stop meant sure death, and with unseeing eyes, and ears ringing with strange sounds, and mind sinking into a strange, pleasant numbness, I still struggled on, making a new footprint less fast than the drifting storm covered the last one made. And then I stepped in a burrow and fell backward, and could not rise again; and there we lay, done for and lost in the trackless snows of the Sandias.

IX

PULLING THROUGH

A Narrow Escape. — San Antonito. — A Rich Trail. — "Poisoned!" — My First Experience with Chile. — A Lesson in Traveller's Courtesy. — The Pueblo of Isleta. — Character of its Citizens.

I HAVE been in a great many dangers of many sorts where I expected to feel death's hand on my shoulder the next moment; but in none where escape seemed more absolutely impossible than that night in the Sandia snows. And yet there was none of the usual horror now — for that merciful drowsiness of mind and body was like an anæsthetic against the protracted dread which otherwise would have been unbearable. With every breath I grew more comfortable in body and more dreamily content. The reality of death seemed far off and hazy — as though it concerned only some other person. Shadow was under my neck and propped me up like a pillow. He did not move and I thought perhaps he was dead, but did

not look to see. It did not seem to interest me. I was warm and free from pain, and my lids were very heavy. The storm was passing, and on the western horizon lay a tiny belt of sapphire sky. The sun was just entering it, red and swollen. Now it was half down behind the black peaks; and on a sudden I saw two tiny specks moving across the sinking disk of day. The sight roused me like a douche of ice-water. It was as though a rough and painful hand had shaken me savagely from a happy dream. There was an inexpressible pain in the awakening; I came back in an instant under the accumulated tortures of the day, but without volition, and indeed against my will. But there was no helping it — it was no thought, or reasoning back, but a violent force apparently quite outside of me. Yet, of course, it was all within the strange chamber of the brain — for it was Hope come to life again, and dragging Will from his faint. For those two specks meant life ahead. They had no shape, for they were five miles away; but their motion told the story to a hunter's eye. They might have been horses, so far as visible form went; but they moved as only men move — and men they were. I staggered to my feet with a yell of joy — a yell that started from deep lungs but fainted on powerless lips in a babyish squeal that made me laugh hysterically. I was wide

awake now — weak as a child, but with the will again supreme. I threw Shadow again upon my shoulders, and plunged on through the heavy drifts, with no more thought of dying. But it was a fearful struggle, and many a time I thought that I must drop and give up, even with life so near. Death seemed awful now, and fear helped my trembling legs. And at last, in the cold, still night, guided by a blazing window, I stumbled into the little hamlet of San Antonito, and fell fainting across the threshold of the first house.

The owner, a kindly German trader named Walther, dragged me in and brought me to with hot wine and with dry clothing and with rubbing; and when at last I could help myself I tried the same treatment on Shadow, all except the clothing. A roaring fire, a hot, appetizing supper, and a delicious bed were such inconceivable luxuries as they cannot dream of who have never been through such an experience; and soon we had forgotten the horrors of the day. Next morning — thanks to perfect physical training — I felt all right except for a strange weakness which did not wear off for some days; and although Shadow's ears were so badly frozen that they never fully recovered, he seemed otherwise in very good trim. We made an early start, for I was growing anxious to reach a post-office; and there were several

little Mexican hamlets along the way, in case we found ourselves "outnumbered" by the snow.

For three miles we had a frightful time, — steeply up hill through waist-high snow, — and then crossed the divide and had a long, rough declivity before us. Now, with every mile, the snow was perceptibly less: and by the time we had passed Cañoncito and another "town" of five houses, our wading was not more than ten inches deep. That is not generally pleasant walking, but to us it seemed a perfect paradise. At Tijeras we began to find bare patches, wherein the mud was deeper than were the alternate drifts. But little things like that made no impression on our rising spirits; and stopping at Tijeras only long enough to swallow a *tortilla* and some tasteless Mexican curd cheese, we hurried on down the head of the Tijeras Cañon. As we went on the snow grew scantier, for we had already descended a couple of thousand feet, perhaps; and the alternate snowbanks and bare gravel bars caused me a curious find. A pair of oxen had gone down the road ahead of us; and I frequently noticed that whenever they came to the bare ground the little "stilts" of snow which had caked in their hoofs broke off — a trifle to be thought of only because I was familiar with the discomforts of walking on such snowballs, and reflected what a nuisance it would be if my heels

"balled up" as high as did those of the oxen. Just then a curious glitter caught my eye and I stooped to see what it was. One of the hoof-cakes in breaking from the hoof had caught a considerable ball of gravel in its wet clutch and now lay half turned over, leaving a cavity in the soil beneath. And right in that casual gravel cup lay the cause of the glitter — a beautiful nugget of placer gold, weighing only about three dollars, but one of my pet "relics" because it came to me in so odd a way.

Just at sunset we came to the two houses which comprised Carnöe, and were hospitably taken in by the poor Mexican at the second. I shall always remember Ramon Arrera, the first Mexican in whose house I began to understand the universal hospitality of these simple folk — both for his courtesy and for a very funny acquaintance I found there. You may be sure Shadow and I were ravenous by this time; and the prospect of appeasing our appetites looked to me very slender. This fear was confirmed when Señor Arrera led me to the kitchen for supper. Upon the lonely looking table was only a cup of coffee, a dry tortilla (the everlasting unleavened cakes, cooked on a hot stone), and a smoking platter of apparent stewed tomatoes. Now if there is anything which does not appeal to my stomach it is stewed tomatoes;

but I was too hungry to be fastidious. There was nothing wherewith to eat except an enormous iron spoon, and with starving and unseemly haste I ladled a liberal supply from the platter to my plate and swallowed the first big spoonful at a gulp. And then I sprang up with a howl of pain and terror, fully convinced that these "treacherous Mexicans" had assassinated me by quick poison — for I had very ignorant and silly notions in those days about Mexicans, as most of us are taught by superficial travellers who do not know one of the kindliest races in the world. My mouth and throat were consumed with living fire, and my stomach was a pit of boiling torture. I snatched the cup of hot coffee and swallowed half its contents — which aggravated my distress ten-fold, as any of you will understand who may try the experiment. I rushed from the house and plunged into a snowbank, biting the snow to quench that horrible inner fire. Poor Arrera followed me in astonishment, but smothering his laughter. What was the matter with the señor? I came very near answering with my six-shooter, but his sincerity was plain, and I listened to him. Poison? No, indeed, señor. That was only *chile colorado, chile con carne,* which liked to the Mexicans *mucho* — and to many Americanos *tambien.* And so it was — only the universal red pepper of the Southwest,

red pepper ground coarse and stewed with little bits of meat; an ounce or so of meat to a pint of the reddest, fiercest, most quenchless red pepper you ever dreamed of! I let him lead me back to the house, but with no more thought of eating. I felt inwardly raw from lips to waist, and great tears rolled down my cheeks for hours. Shadow ate greedily of the dreadful stuff, but I slept that night on a stomach which was empty, but certainly did not feel lonely, and a solemn vow never again to look upon the chile when it was colorado.

But next morning when I came out to breakfast very faint and weak, there was only the platter of blood-red stew and the tortilla and the coffee. I gulped down the leaden tortilla, with frequent gulps of coffee, and sighed. I was *very* hungry. The chile con carne smelt very good, at least. Perhaps — and I took a bare drop upon the spoon and put it to quaking lips. Hm! Not so bad! Still I remembered last night, and took *two* drops. Rather good! A spoonful — a plateful — another — in fine, when I was done, not a bit was left of that inflammatory two quarts upon the platter, and I actually wished for more! The chile "habit" is a curious thing. Simply agonizing at first taste, the fiery mess soon conquers such an affection as is never won by the milder viands, which are sooner liked and sooner forgotten. I

never missed and longed for any other food as I did for chile when I got back to civilization.

From Carnöe it was a short, dry morning's walk across the upland slope from the mountains to the Rio Grande at the enterprising little American city of Albuquerque, where I stopped a day to get even with correspondence. Coming out of there a bright December morning, I also "got even" with something else — with an emergency at which we all have to rebel now and then, but which the traditions of an effete civilization do not always permit us to meet in the soul-satisfying manner I was able to, and for which I am sure of being envied. There are few of us who have not felt an old-Adam yearning to rend some boor who "cut" us or met our courtesy with a brutal coldness; and in behalf of sputtering humanity I was glad to get back one blow.

As I trudged along the sandy road, my rifle on my shoulder, I met a middle-aged, handsome, well-tended American, jogging along on a valuable horse. In this native land of courtesy I had learned that human decency of the road which brightens travel in a Spanish country. Whoso met me greeted me politely and gave me good day; and now I did the same. So when the florid personage on a high horse came face to face with me I said: —

"Good afternoon, sir."

He looked at me coldly, and made no sign.

"Good afternoon, sir," I repeated, with a sudden change of heart. But he only stared with more insolent disdain.

He was within six feet. I snapped the rifle forward from my shoulder and looked him in the eye along the sights. The hammer was up.

"Perhaps you did not hear my remark, sir. I said good afternoon to you."

This was said very quietly, but it had a remarkable effect. The ruddy purple cheeks paled suddenly, and the pudgy hands grasped spasmodically at the saddle-horn, as if to keep from a fall.

"Good afternoon, sir! Good afternoon, sir! A very fine afternoon, sir! I hope you are well, sir. I beg pardon, beg pardon, sir!" he stuttered, and putting spurs to his horse was off like the wind, never once stopping to look back.

Three hours' walk thence to the south along the river — which was fairly alive with wild geese and ducks — brought us to the quaint Pueblo Indian town of Isleta. There was little dream in me, as we rambled through the strange little city of adobe, and interviewed its swarthy people, that this was some time to be my home — that the quiet, kindly dark faces were to shine with neighborliness; and to look sad when the tiny blood-

vessel in my brain had broken anew and left me speechless and helpless for months, or when I fell bored with buckshot by the midnight assassin, nor of all the other strange happenings a few years were to bring. But though there was no seeing ahead to that which would have given a deeper interest, the historic old town, which was the asylum of the surviving Spaniards in that bloody summer of 1680, had already a strong attraction for me. There were more fine-looking Indians and more spacious and admirable houses than I had yet seen — and, indeed, Isleta, which is the next largest of the nineteen pueblos, numbering over one thousand one hundred people, has the largest and best rooms, the largest and best farms, and most extensive orchards and herds and other wealth, though it is one of the least picturesque, since its buildings are nearly all of but one story, while in some pueblos the houses are six stories high.

The pueblo of Isleta is one of the strange little city-republics of that strange Indian race which had achieved this quaint civilization of their own before Columbus was born. Its people own over a hundred and fifteen thousand acres of land under United States patent, and their little kingdom along the Rio Grande is one of the prettiest places in New Mexico. They have well-tended farms,

orchards and vineyards, herds of cattle, sheep, and horses, and are indeed very different in every way from the average eastern conception of an Indian. It is a perennial wonder to me that American travellers care so little to see the wonders of their own land. They find abroad nothing more picturesque, nothing more marvellous, in scenery or in man, than they could easier see within the wonderland of the Southwest, with its strange landscapes, its noble ruins of a prehistoric past, and the astounding customs of its present aborigines. A pueblo ceremonial dance is one of the most remarkable sights to be witnessed anywhere; and there are many other customs no less worth seeing.

I have lived now in Isleta for four years, with its Indians for my only neighbors; and better neighbors I never had and never want. They are unmeddlesome but kindly, thoughtful, and loyal, and wonderfully interesting. Their endless and beautiful folklore, their quaint and often astonishing customs, and their startling ceremonials have made a fascinating study. To relate even the small part of these things which I have learned would take volumes; but one of the first and least secret customs I witnessed may be described here. The Chinese feed their dead, beginning with a grand banquet which precedes the hearse, and is

spread upon the newly covered grave. The Pueblos do not thus. The funeral is decked forth with no baked meats; and the banquet for all the dead together is given once a year in a ceremonial by itself. The burials take place from their Christian church; and the only remarkable ceremonies are those performed in the room where the soul left its clay tenement. All that is a secret ceremony, however, and may be seen by no stranger. But all are free to witness the strange rites of the Day of the Dead.

X

THE FIESTA DE LOS MUERTOS

A Day of the Dead in a Pueblo Town. — The Appetite of a Departed Indian. — The Biscuits of the Angels. — An Acrobatic Bell. — A Windfall for the Padre.

To-day the aborigines who sleep nine feet deep in the bosom of the bare gravel graveyard in front of the quaint church of the pueblo of Isleta have the first square meal they have enjoyed in a twelvemonth; for to-day the Day of the Dead is celebrated with considerable pomp and ceremony. It is to be hoped that death somewhat dulls the edge of an Indian's naturally robust appetite, else so protracted a fast would surely cause him inconvenience. But the rations are generous when they do come.

The bustle of preparation for the *Fiesta de los Muertos* has been upon the pueblo for several days, in a sort of domestic crescendo. While the men have been — as usual in the fall — looking rather devotedly upon the new wine when it is a sallow

red, and loading themselves by day to go off in vocal pyrotechnics at night, when they meander arm in arm about the village singing an aboriginal "won't go until morning," the women have been industriously employed at home. They never seem to yearn for the flowing bowl, and keep steadfastly sober throughout the temptations of wine-making, always ready to go out and collar a too obstreperous spouse and persuade him home. It is well for the family purse that this is so. We have a governor this year who is *muy bravo*, and woe to the convivialist who lifts his ululation where Don Vicente can hear him, or who starts in to smash things where the old man's eagle eye will light upon him. In a brief space of time two stalwart *alguazils* will loom up on the scene, armed with a peculiar adjustable wooden yoke — a mammoth handcuff in design — which is fitted around the culprit's neck, and off he is dragged by the handles to the little 'dobe jail, there to repent of his folly until he has added a dollar or two to Don Vicente's treasury.

For the last three days the dark little store of the trader has been besieged by a crowd of women, bearing fat brown babes in the shawls upon their backs, and upon their erect heads sacks of corn or wheat, or under their arms the commonest fractional currency of the pueblo — the sheepskin, worth ten or fifteen cents according to weight. Some bring

coin of the realm, for this is one of the wealthiest pueblos as well as the largest. Their purchases were sugar, flour, lard, candles, calicoes, and occasionally chocolate, all with festal intent.

For three days, too, the queer mud bee-hives of ovens outside the houses have been "running to their fullest capacity" all over town. Betimes in the morning, the prudent housewife would be seen instigating a generous and persistent fire in her *horno*. Then, when the thick adobe walls were hot enough, she would rake out the coals and ashes, and swab the interior with a wet rag tied to a pole. Next, a brief disappearance into the house, and a prompt emergence with a broad, clean board, covered with the most astounding freaks of ingenuity in dough. In most things the Pueblo appears unimaginative enough — though this is a deceptive appearance — but when it comes to sculpturing feast-day bread and cakes the inventive talent displayed outdoes the wildest delirium of a French pastry-cook. Those culinary monstrosities could be safely worshipped without infringing the Decalogue, for they are like unto nothing that is in the earth, nor in the heavens above the earth, nor in the waters under the earth. Their shapes always remind me of Ex-Treasurer Spinner's signature — and they are quite as unapproachable.

Having been placed in the oven, the door of

which was then closed with a big, flat stone, and sealed with mud, the baking remained there its allotted time, and then, crisp and delicious — for there are few better breadmakers than these Pueblos — it was stowed away in the inner room to await its ceremonial use.

Yesterday began more personal preparations for the important event. Go into whatever dooryard you would, you found anywhere from one to half a dozen dusky but comely matrons and maids, bending over brightly painted *tinajas* and giving careful ablution to their soft black hair. Inside the house, mayhap, gay red calicoes were being deftly stitched into simple garments, and soft white buckskins being cut into the long strips to be wound into the characteristic female "boot." The men were doing little, save to lend their moral support. But late last night, little bands of them wandered jovially over the pueblo, pausing at the door of every house wherein they found a light, and singing a pious appeal to all the saints to protect the inmates — who were expected to reward this intercession by gifts of bread, meat, coffee, tobacco, or something else, to the prayerful serenaders.

Thus anticipated, the Day of the Dead dawned clear and warm. As the sun crawled above the ragged crest of the Sandias, the gray old sacristan, in shirt and *calzoncillos* of spotless white, climbed

the crazy staircase to the roof of the church and assaulted the bell, which has had comparatively few breathing-spells the rest of the day. The ringing of the church-bell of Isleta is an experience that is worth a long journey to enjoy. The bells hang in two incongruous wooden towers, perched upon the front corners of the huge adobe church. There are no ropes, and tongues would be a work of supererogation. The ringer, stepping into the belfry through a broken blind, grasps a hammer in his hand, and hits the bell a tentative rap as if to see whether it is going to strike back. Encouraged by finding that it does not, he gives it another thump after a couple of seconds; then another; then, growing interested, he whales it three times in half as many seconds; then, after a wee pause, he yields to his enthusiasm, rushes upon the bell, drubs it in a wild tattoo, curries it down from crown to rim with a multiplicative scrub, and thenceforth devotes himself to making the greatest possible number of sound-waves to the second. As a bell-persecutor, he has no superiors.

All this feverish eloquence of the bell had no visible effect for awhile. The people evidently knew its excitable temperament, and were in no hurry to answer its clatter. But by nine o'clock there was a general awakening. Along the aimless "street" across the big flat plaza, long lines of

women began to come churchward in single file. Each bore upon her head a big, flaring basket — the rush *chiquihuite* of home make, or the elegantly woven Apache *jicara* — heaped high with enough toothsome viands to make the soundest sleeper in the *campo santo* forget his fear of fasting. Each woman was dressed in her best. Her moccasins and queer aldermanic "boots" shone bright and spotless; her dark skirt of heavy home-woven stuff was new, and showed at its ending by the knee a faint suggestion of snowy white; her costliest corals and turquoise and silver beads hung from her neck; the *tapalo* which covered all her head except the face was of the gayest pattern. One young girl had a turkey-red table-cloth for a head-shawl, and another an American piano-cover of crimson with old gold embroidery.

Marching through the opening in the high adobe wall which surrounds the graveyard, each woman went to the spot whose gravel covered beloved bones, set her basket down there, planted a lot of candles around it, lighted them, and remained kneeling patiently behind her offering. It was a quaint and impressive sight there under the bright New Mexico sun — the great square, shut in by the low adobe houses (for Isleta has none of the terraced houses of the more remote pueblos), the huge adobe church filling the space on the north, with

its inadequate steeples, its two dark arches, and its long dwindle into the quarters of the priest; the indiscriminate graveyard, whose flat slope showed only the three latest of its unnumbered hundreds of graves; the hundred kneeling women weeping quietly under their shawls and tending the candles around their offerings while the dead ate to their heart's content, according to the belief of these simple folk.

The big, clumsy doors of the church were open, and presently some of the newcomers entered with their basket offerings, crossing themselves at the door, and disposed their baskets, their candles, and their knees at certain points along the rude floor of loose boards laid flat on smooth adobe. It was not at random that they took these scattered positions. These were they whose relatives had enjoyed the felicity of being buried under the church floor; and each knelt over the indistinguishable resting-place of her loved and lost. The impressive mass was prefaced by a short, business-like talk from the new priest. It had always been the custom for the women to wail loudly and incessantly over the graves, all through mass; but the new padre intended to inaugurate a reform right here. He had told them the Sunday before that there must be no "keening" during divine service; and now he gave them another word of warning on the same

subject. If they did not maintain proper quiet during mass he would not bless the graves.

The warning was effective, and the mass went on amid respectful silence. A group of Mexican women kneeling near the altar rail, sang timidly in pursuit of the little organ, with which they never quite caught up. The altar flared with innumerable candles which twinkled on ancient saints and modern chromos, on mirrors and tinsel and paper flowers. Through the three square, high, dirty windows in the five-foot adobe wall the sunlight strained, lighting up vaguely the smooth round *vigas* and strange brackets overhead; the kneeling figures, the heaped-up baskets, and the flickering candles on the floor below. Near the door, under the low gallery, stood a respectful knot of men, Indians and Mexicans. The gray-headed sacristan and his assistant shuffled hither and thither with eagle eyes, watching the candles of the women lest they burn too low and kindle the floor; and now and then stooping to snuff out some threatening wick with their bare fingers and an air of satisfaction. Sometimes they were a little too zealous, and put out candles which might safely have burned three or four minutes longer. But no sooner were their backs turned than the watchful proprietress of that candle would reach over and relight it. There should be no tallow wasted.

At last the mass was over and the padre went into the retiring room to change his vestments, the women and baskets retaining their positions. Directly he reappeared, and the sacristan tottered beside him with a silver bowl of holy water. Stopping in front of the woman and basket nearest the altar, the priest read a long prayer for the repose of the soul over whose long-deserted tenement she knelt, and then sprinkled holy water thitherward, at once moving on to the next. The woman thus satisfied rose, put the basket on her head, and disappeared in the long side passage leading to the priest's quarters, while the *ayudante* thumbed out her candles and tossed them into a wooden soap box which he carried. So went the slow round throughout the church, and then through the hundred patient kneeling waiters on the gravel of the campo santo outside. As soon as a grave was blessed, the woman, the candles, and the basket of goodies vanished elsewhere, and the padre's storeroom began to swell with fatness. The baskets were as notable for neat arrangements as for lavish heaping. A row of ears of corn standing upright within the rim of the basket formed a sort of palisade which doubled its capacity. Within this cereal stockade were artistically deployed those indescribable contortions in bread and cake, funny little "turnovers" with a filling of

stewed dried peaches; half dried bunches of grapes whose little withered sacks of condensed sunlight and sweetness were like raisins, and still displaying the knots of grass by which they had dangled from the rafters; watermelons, whole or sliced; apples, quinces and peaches, onions, and occasionally candy and chocolate. The beauty of it all was, that after the dear departed had gorged their fill, there was just as much left for the padre, whose perquisite the remainder invariably is. He treated me to a peep into his storeroom in the evening, and it was a remarkable sight. Fully two tons of these edible offerings, assorted as to their kinds, filled the floor with enormous heaps, and outside, in the long *portal*, was enough blue, and red, and white corn to fill an army of horses. Bread led the list; and as the liberal proportion of lard in this bread keeps it good for months, the padre's housekeepers will not need to bake for a long time to come.

With the blessings of the last grave, the services of the *Fiesta de los Muertos* were over, and the population settled down to the enjoyment of a rare repose — for they are a very industrious people and always busy, save on holidays, with their farms, their orchards, their houses, and other matters.

XI

ACROSS THE RIO GRANDE

Twenty Miles of Moss Agates. — A Night with the Cowboys. — Shooting a Tarantula. — Christmas at the Section-House. — A Board-Hunt. — The Wild Dance at Laguna. — The City of the Cliff. — Acoma and its People. — Buried Treasures. — A $70,000 Seat.

At Isleta the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad has its junction with the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fé, and I was to follow the general line of the former road, which gives access to the most wonderful and the least-known corners of America. I had a very jolly night singing college songs and chatting with one of the operators at the little junction office, — a brave, gentle boy who was fighting off consumption here, and who died at last, far from his eastern home, — and next morning turned my back to the pleasant Rio Grande Valley and climbed the long volcanic hills to the west. It was a day of surprises to me. At the top of the ten-mile divide were many extinct craters,

some of which I explored, and their work of forgotten ages marked the whole surrounding country. All day long I was walking over pebbles and stones which are almost treasures in the East — twenty miles of moss agates! I picked them up at every rod or so — nuggets from the size of a bean to larger than my head, and many of them most beautiful specimens. There was also much petrified wood — gorgeous chips of hardest agate, of all colors, and still plainly showing the structure of the plant that had turned to stone uncounted thousands of years ago. When, late at night, I reached Rio Puerco (the "Dirty River") my load weighed fifty-one pounds, — thanks to the peck or so of agates in the capacious pockets of my duck coat, — and I was glad to see the end of that heavy thirty-five miles. My bed of a blanket on the board floor of the station — the only accommodations, nine times out of ten, for the next nine hundred miles — was luxury enough after such a playing at pack-beast.

The Rio Puerco is well named, and is a type of many of the strange streams of the Southwest. There are in New Mexico and Arizona and the desert border of the Garden State of States some clear and beautiful brooks of pure, delicious water, sealed with the crowning approval of trout; and there are as many sluggish, slimy, villainous

streams whose alkaline waters are rank poison which no thing can drink nor life inhabit, and the Rio Puerco is one of the latter. It is over a hundred and twenty-five miles in length and flows mostly through one of the most untravelled portions of New Mexico, — a tiny brook whose volume is no more than that of a five-mile rivulet in the East, — watering and making green a pretty thread of a valley, but itself accurst.

The next day's walk was short, but very wearisome with that crushing load, and at the sight of San José — a "town" of a section-house and a ranch-house — I decided to do no more without rest. A long-haired cowboy, with a twenty-pound buffalo gun across the saddle, came loping up as I drew near, greeted me pleasantly, made fast friends with suspicious Shadow, and bade me over to the ranch-house for the night. My evening in the wind-swept shanty with him and the three other cowboys then at headquarters — the rest being scattered over the many leagues of the range — was a very pleasant one. Cowboy hospitality is always genuine, though rough, and one who has trouble with these wild riders has only himself to thank. Here I got rid of one of the most troublesome parts of my load — trading my venerable and battered Winchester rifle for a splendid new Colt's six-shooter with all its trap-

pings — a perfect weapon which has since seen me through many a "close call." The exchange was a most welcome relief, and as for effectiveness, I soon got so handy with the new arm that there was no need for the rifle.

On the road to El Rito next day I met two belated foes, my encounter with whom illustrates the curious and unreasoning prejudices which are born in us and will not begone. One was a sluggish, half-frozen rattlesnake, whose head I incontinently hacked off with unalarmed hunting-knife. The other was a huge, dark, hairy tarantula — or, to be more exact, the bush spider, popularly called tarantula. *He* was lively enough, and jumped at me a foot at a lift. Within a yard of him I would not have come for worlds. I cut his hideous body in twain from ten feet away with a careful bullet from my forty-four. Snakes I have always rather liked and never had the remotest fear of; but that inborn horror of spiders I have never been able to shake off — though in disgust at the weakness I forced myself for two years to catch and kill in my bare fingers every spider I found and suffered inconceivably in doing it. But to this day a cold chill runs down me whenever I come suddenly upon one of these most devilish of created things.

It was Christmas Eve when we reached El Rito and its lone section-house, and I felt a bit of hol-

lowness under my heart. This did not seem particularly Christmas-like to a graduate from the old New England fire-place, with its pendent stockings, and from the glorious Christmas dinner of the old home. But there was no use in moping about it, and I strode up to the section-house to the usual wretched supper. But there was a considerable surprise for me. The section "boss," a tall, angular, good-natured Pennsylvanian named Phillips, seemed to "take a shine" to me at once, and before supper was over he had invited me to stay over to-morrow and eat Christmas dinner with them. The "boys" had "chipped in" and sent to Albuquerque for turkey and cranberries, and all the other blessed old standbys, and it was going to be "the real thing." I made a feeble remark about being in haste to reach San Mateo, but Phillips suppressed me at once. "'Tain't every day we kill a pig and give the brustles to the poor," he said, "and you'll just stay and eat!"

And stay I did. And what with a visit to the little Indian pueblo near by, and a successful hunt for coyotes, and a memorable dinner, it was, after all, a rather merry Christmas for Shadow and me, with our rough hosts, in the dirty little section-house among the lava crags of El Rito.

"Stumpin' it to Californy, hey?" ejaculated the section-boss for the twentieth time, as though the

idea was a burr in his mind. And then at last he got beyond the exclamation and suddenly cried, "Banged if I don't stump it with you!"

I looked at him in mild astonishment, but he was as good as his word. That very night he threw up his position, made arrangements about his pay checks, and packed in a bandanna handkerchief what he wished for the journey, giving the rest of his scant belongings to the laborers. He did not ask whether I desired his company, nor did it seem necessary to advise him against the undertaking — for there was little likelihood that one of his temperament would carry this sudden resolve very far.

That evening I took time for a little hunting on a plan which caused great wonderment to Phillips and his men. The country was swarming with coyotes, which were feasting on the countless dead cattle; but it was very hard to get within rifle-shot of the cunning brutes. I particularly wanted another skin just then; and determined to get it by a board-hunt. Phillips got me a smooth board, an inch auger, and some lard, at my request, and I soon made a lapboard. A dozen auger-holes, bored almost through, were filled with lard, in which were a few grains of strychnine, and then the surface of the board was similarly smeared. Carrying this peculiar trap half a mile from the

house, I set it in a pass between the cliffs, and came back to our Christmas dinner. Had I put out a piece of poisoned meat, Mr. Coyote would have picked it up and trotted off to die, of course, but very likely in the next county, where he would not enrich me. But any carnivorous animal that comes to a lapboard stays there — licking the lard first from the level, and then squeezing its tongue into the holes for what is there, until the sudden spasm comes and it is too late to run for water. Sure enough, next morning at sunrise the largest and handsomest coyote I ever saw, before or since, was lying with his nose not six inches from the fatal board. I "cased" him — that is, took off the whole skin without a cut, pulling the whole body through the mouth — to the utter stupefaction of the Mexican laborers, who would not believe such a thing possible. That is the hardest way to skin an animal, but it is the only way to save the whole pelt without the serious waste from the "tags," which come where a skin is "pegged out" to dry. The hide, which comes off like a tight glove, inside out, should be re-turned, so that the flesh side is within, and then stuffed with straw or any substance which will fill it out plumply and still allow a slight circulation of air within. When it is perfectly dry it can be slit from chin to tail with a sharp knife, and there you

have a perfect and sightly pelt. It took me three hours of grubbing in the short, dry buffalo grass to get enough to fill the coyote's suit, but the skin, which I have yet, was fine enough to pay for the trouble.

At 10.30 Phillips bade good-bye to El Rito, and we started off together. At noon we came to Laguna, where the Indians were holding their remarkable holiday dances — as the wild yells that came down the wind apprised us miles away. On the bridge which spans the creek near the pueblo, Shadow, bewildered by these howls, suddenly turned back to me for protection. The section-men were pushing the heavy handcar against the wind, and in his fright he collided with it. One wheel ran over him, derailing the car; and there he was, half dangling between the ties and half entangled in the wheels. I feared he was done for; but when we pulled him out from the wreck he was uninjured. "A fool fer loock!" commented the stumpy Irishman; and I agreed with him.

Laguna is the most picturesque of the pueblos that are easily accessible; and as the railroad runs at the very base of the great dome of rock upon which the quaint, terraced houses are huddled, there is no difficulty in reaching it. On the summit of the rock is the plaza or large public

square, surrounded on all sides by the tall house-walls and entered only by three narrow alleys. We hastened up the sloping hill by one of the strange footpaths which the patient feet of two centuries have worn eight inches deep in the solid rock, and entered the plaza. It was a remarkable sight. The house-tops were brilliant with a gorgeously apparelled throng of Indian spectators, watching with breathless interest the strange scene at their feet. Up and down the plaza's smooth floor of solid rock the thirty dancers were leaping, marching, wheeling, in perfect rhythm to the wild chant of the chorus, and to the pom, pom, of a huge drum. Their faces were weirdly besmeared with vermilion and upon their heads were war-bonnets of eagle feathers. Some carried bows and arrows, some elaborate tomahawks, — though that was never a characteristic weapon of the Pueblo Indians, — some lances and shields, and a few revolvers and Winchesters. They were stripped to the waist and wore curious skirts of buckskin reaching to the knee, ponderous silver belts, — of which some dancers had two or three apiece, — and an endless profusion of silver bracelets and rings, silver, turquoise, and coral necklaces and ear-rings, and sometimes beautifully beaded buckskin leggins. The captain or leader had a massive necklace of the terrible claws of the grizzly bear. He

was a superb Apollo in bronze; fully six feet three inches tall, and straight as an arrow. His long raven hair was done up in a curious wad on the top of his head and stuck full of eagle feathers. His leggins were the most elaborate I ever saw — one solid mass behind of elegant bead-work. He carried in his hand a long, steel-pointed lance, decorated with many gay-colored ribbons, and he used this much after the fashion of a drum-major.

When we first arrived upon the scene, and for half an hour thereafter, the dancers were formed in a rectangle, standing five abreast and six deep, jumping up and down in a sort of rudimentary clog-step, keeping faultless time and ceaselessly chanting to the "music" of two small bass drums. The words were not particularly thrilling, consisting chiefly, it seemed to my untutored ear, of "Ho! o-o-o-h! Ho! Ho! Ah! Ho!" but the chant was a genuine melody, though different in all ways from any tune you will hear elsewhere. Then the leader gave a yelp like a dog, and started off over the smooth rock floor, the whole chorus following in single file, leaping high into the air and coming down, first on one foot and then on the other, one knee stiff and the other bent, and still singing at the top of their lungs. No matter how high they jumped, they all came down in unison with each other and with the tap of the rude drums. No clog-

dancer could keep more perfect time to music than do these queer leapers. The evolutions of their "grand march" are too intricate for description, and would completely bewilder a fashionable leader of the German. They wound around in snake-like figures, now and then falling into strange but regular groups, never getting confused, never missing a step of their laborious leaping. And such endurance of lung and muscle! They keep up their jumping and shouting all day and all night. During the whole of this serpentine dance, the drums and the chorus kept up their clamor, while the leader punctuated the chant by a series of wild whoops at regular intervals. All the time too, while their legs were busy, their arms were not less so. They kept brandishing aloft their various weapons, in a significant style that "would make a man hunt tall grass if he saw them out on the plains," as Phillips declared. And as for attentive audiences, no American star ever had such a one as that which watched the Christmas dance at Laguna. Those eight hundred men, women, and children all stood looking on in decorous silence, never moving a muscle nor uttering a sound. Only once did they relax their gravity and that was at our coming. My nondescript appearance, as I climbed up a house and sat down on the roof, was too much for them, as well it might be. The

sombrero, with its snake-skin band; the knife and two six-shooters in my belt; the bulging duck coat and long-fringed snowy leggins; the skunk-skin dangling from my blanket roll; and last, but not least, the stuffed coyote over my shoulders, looking natural as life, made up a picture I feel sure they never saw before and probably never will see again. They must have though me Pa-puk-ke-wis, the wild man of the plains. A lot of the children crowded around me, and when I caught the coyote by the neck and shook it, at the same time growling at them savagely, they jumped away and the whole assembly was convulsed with laughter.

For hours we watched the strange, wild spectacle, until the sinking sun warned us to be moving, and we reluctantly turned our faces westward. It was after dark when we reached the nasty little section-house which comprised Cubero, and we found no supper and no better bed than the greasy floor. Phillips had been in high spirits all day, and was constantly exclaiming about the surprise of the natives when we should have walked to California. "I'll show you how to do it!" he cried, over and over. "I used to walk forty miles a day on an average and carry a surveyor's chain." But at the Cubero accommodations he began to grumble.

Cubero is the nearest station to the most wonderful aboriginal city on earth — cliff-built, cloud-

swept, matchless Acoma. Thirteen miles south, up a valley of growing beauty, we came to the home of these strange sky-dwellers, a butte of rock nearly four hundred feet tall and seventy acres in area.

We were handsomely entertained in the comfortable and roomy house of Martin Valle, the seven-times governor of the pueblo — a fine-faced, kindly, still active man of ninety, who rides his plunging bronco to-day as firmly as the best of them; and who in the years since our first meeting has become a valued friend. With him that day was his herculean war-captain, Faustino. I doubt if there was ever carved a manlier frame than Faustino's; and certain it is that there never was a face nearer the ideal Mars. A grand, massive head, outlined in strength rather than delicacy; great, rugged features, yet superbly moulded withal — an eye like a lion's, nose and forehead full of character, and a jaw which was massive but not brutal, calm but inexorable as fate. I have never seen a finer face — for a man whose trade is war, that is. Of course it would hardly fit a professor's shoulders. But it will always stand out in my memory with but two or three others — the most remarkable types I have ever encountered. One of the Council accompanied us, too, a kindly, intelligent old man named José Miguel Chino — since gone to sleep in the indeterminate jumble of the gray graveyard.

In a "street" paved with the eternal rock of the mesa were a hundred children playing jubilantly. It was a pleasant sight, and they were pleasant children. I have never seen any of them fighting, and they are as bright, clean-faced, sharp-eyed, and active as you find in an American schoolyard at recess. The boys were playing some sort of Acoma tag, and the girls mostly looked on. I don't know that they had the scruples of the sex about boisterous play. But nearly every one of them carried a fat baby brother or sister on her back, in the bight of her shawl. These uncomplaining little nurses were from twelve years old down to five. Truly, the Acoma maiden begins to be a useful member of the household at an early age!

Coming back from an exploration of the great church with its historic paintings, and the dizzy "stone ladder" where the patient moccasins of untold generations have worn their imprint six inches deep in the rock, I found the old governor sitting at his door, indulging in the characteristic "shave" of his people. He was impassively pecking away at his bronze cheeks and thinking about some matter of state. The aborigine does not put a razor to his face, but goes to the root of the matter — plucking out each hirsute newcomer bodily by pinch of fingernails, or with knife-blade against his thumb, or with tweezers. The governor's

"razor" was a unique and ingenious affair. He had taken the brass shell of a 45-60 rifle cartridge, split it nearly to the base, flattened the two sides, filed their edges true, and given them a slight spread at the fork. Thus he got a pair of tweezers better adapted to his work than the American style. With this he was coolly assaulting his kindly old face, mechanically and methodically, never wincing at the operation.

As we talked in disjointed Spanish, I saw a very wonderful thing — such a thing as is probably not to be seen again in a lifetime. An old crone came in, carrying a six-months' babe. She was a hundred years old, toothless, — for a wonder, for Acoma teeth are long-lived, — snowy-haired, and bony, but not bent. She and the infant were the extremes of six generations, for it was her great-great-great-great-grandchild that dangled in her shawl. I saw the grandmother, great-grandmother, and great-great-grandmother of the child afterwards, the mother being absent at Acomita. Poor old woman! Think of her having cared for five generations of measles, croup, colic, and cholera infantum!

There was a wonderful foot-race that day, too, between half a dozen young men of Acoma and an equal number from Laguna. There were several hundred dollars' worth of ponies and blankets upon the race, and much loud talking accompanied the

preliminaries. Then the runners and the judges went down to the plain, while every one else gathered on the edge of the cliff. At the signal, the twelve lithe, clean-faced athletes started off like deer. Their running costume consisted of the dark-blue *patarabo,* or breech-clout, and their sinewy trunks and limbs were bare. Each side had a stick about the size of a lead pencil; and as they ran, they had to kick this along in front of them, never touching it with the fingers. The course was around a wide circuit which included the mesa of Acoma and several other big hills. I was told afterward that the distance was a good twenty-five miles. The Acoma boys, who won the race, did it in two hours and thirty-one minutes — which would be good running, even without the stick-kicking arrangement.

I gathered many interesting trophies at Acoma — moccasins, necklace ornaments of native jet (which is found rather abundantly in that region), and some superb arrow-heads of red moss agate, opaline, and smoky topaz, and many other curios.

Near Cubero, by the way, is a startling "buried treasure," if popular tradition is to be believed. A hill not far from the railroad is its alleged hiding-place.

According to the accepted story, an expedition from Old Mexico was returning from California

long ago, with an incredible treasure — so much gold that it loaded down some hundreds of burros. They had come safely across the desert, and thus far into New Mexico, when they were set upon by the Apaches in such numbers as to make matters extremely ticklish even for so strong a party. As their only way of escape they dug and timbered a big tunnel, buried their seven million dollars' worth of gold dust and nuggets therein securely, and thus lightened, made a rapid push for home. The Apaches were too many for them, however, and killed off nearly all before they reached Chihuahua. The few survivors made several desperate efforts to get back and remove their treasure, but instead left their scattered bones to bleach on the arid plains, till at last only one man of all the party was left. He died some years later in Europe, whither he had gone to enlist capital for an expedition strong enough to stand off the Indians, who were then making it sultry for New Mexico. After his death the story of the seven millions slumbered for a term of years. Few, if any, in New Mexico had ever heard of it, and the hill rested undisturbed. At last a quiet, mysterious German appeared one day in the Mexican hamlet of Cubero. He was on some momentous mission, but no one could learn what it was until he had carefully picked out a few men whom

he deemed trustworthy, and to them confided his secret. A couple of years before he had cared for a destitute and dying Mexican, who had rewarded his kindness by leaving him the story of the seven million and a map of the spot where it was buried. He had this map and a written guide with him. The map showed Mount San Mateo, the adjacent mesas, the lava flow, "a creek full of sardines" (the Agua Azul), and the hill of gold. In a very short time the German mysteriously disappeared from the village, and so did several well-known citizens. No one knew what had become of them, till a sheep-herder found them digging away at a hill beyond McCarty's. They labored there some weeks, and then the German fell sick and had to be removed to Cubero. He died soon after, and as their work had disclosed nothing tempting, his Mexican partners soon wearied of the job. The story had leaked out, however, and ever since then there have been intermittent but in the aggregate very extensive attempts to unearth the alleged treasure. Mexicans have pottered away there some of their abundant leisure; American ranchers have excavated a good deal, and railroad men have thrown up their jobs to take a spell with pick and spade. One party of Mexicans from Cubero worked there a long time. They were finally rewarded by coming to loose earth and then a timbered tunnel.

But no sooner did they strike the cavity than appalling noises rushed forth, and believing the place haunted, they ran away never to return.

But that golden myth was less interesting to me than a strange bonanza which I personally know to be authentic. It is located in the old town of Cubero, three miles from the station. One of the first houses in the hamlet is that of Don Pablo Pino, the leading merchant of western New Mexico a generation ago. It is a big, square adobe, with the customary placita or court in the centre. The front door, which few Americans are allowed to enter, is an invention of Don Pablo's. It is about six feet wide and five feet high. Now Don Pablo is a tall man, as well as a very heavy and aged one; and to bend his rheumatic joints every time he went in or out would be intolerable. So above the centre of the door a dome a foot higher has been sawed out, wide enough for the passage of his head. On any bright day the old man may be seen; but his wife, an aged sylph of three hundred pounds, is never visible. She has more important cares within. Don Pablo has always distrusted the "gringo" banks, — since there have been any in the Territory, — and has for years kept his hard cash in a safe guarded by the most unique time-lock on record. In a strong inner room, which no stranger ever sees, a narrow hole has been dug down through

the adobe floor. In it lie something like $70,000 in coin; and in a chair upon its trap-door sits the ponderous señora! Truly, it would be an unmannerly cracksman who should tamper with that lock! There are men and guns in plenty about. A strong armed force could hardly capture the strangely guarded treasure, and there have never been, I believe, any attempts. And to this day, the old man, bent over his stout stick, suns himself before his quaint doorway; while his better and heavier half still dozes day and night in her unshifted arm-chair above the treasure.

XII

FROM CUBERO TO SAN MATEO

Phillips gives up. — Southwestern Eloquence. — The Buried City of San Mateo. — Home-life on a Hacienda. — A Mexican "April Fool." — American Citizens who Torture Themselves and Crucify Each Other. — A New Mexico Milking.

The morning when we resumed our westward way from Cubero, the ground was six inches deep with snow, and the storm increasing. The breakfast was simply uneatable, and we started off poorly prepared for so hard a day's work. The slush and mud made walking very difficult; and as we were going steadily up grade the road grew worse with every mile. A hearty dinner at McCarty's cheered us; but as the afternoon wore on Phillips began to be a kill-joy. He was not a profane man, but his groans, sighs, objurgations of the weather, and growing pessimism about life in general made the way almost as cheerful as a funeral procession. "Say, don't you know this is

an awful big undertaking to walk to Los Angeles," he broke out every now and then; and it was plain what shape his thoughts were taking. He kept falling behind and then running to catch up, while I ploughed ahead as fast as ever I could. My heart rather smote me, but it was a mercy to both of us to try his metal at the outset; if he was "infirm of purpose," the sooner we parted company the better for both; and if he was of the real stuff this would bring it out.

For only twenty-five miles, that was a very hard day's work, and when we reached Grant's in the evening Phillips' walking days were done. He left me there and took the train for California, and I never saw him but once again.

From Grant's I was to make a side-trip of twenty-five miles up to the quaint Mexican hamlet of San Mateo to visit Colonel Manuel Chaves, the finest rifle shot and greatest Indian fighter in the Southwest in his day. Our five days' acquaintance then ripened into one of the dearest of friendships, and since the old hero's death his gallant sons have grown near to me in companionship through such dangers as draw men together.

But the getting to San Mateo must not be overlooked. The snows were deep and it was late at night; but a servant of the Chaves house was at

Grants with a "bull-team." If I walked, the hospitable Spanish hearts would be outraged. No, I must get into the big freight-wagon and go to sleep — Tircio had strict orders not to let me walk. So I obediently crawled under the wagon-sheet and snuggled down in my sleeping-bag, while Tircio sat forward and promulgated his blacksnake and exhorted the oxen. Once in awhile he said something personal to them, but no more than any one would say who had to drive such stupids. There was no hint of the rare pyrotechnics to follow.

New Mexico is the native heath of profanity. I have heard with interest the oratory of those who elsewhere enjoy an undeserved repute for their ability to swing the dictionary around by the tail and shake all the swear-words loose. But bless you, they don't know their "a, b, abs." The most unambitious *paisano* can swear around them and past them and over them with the easy grace of a greyhound circumnavigating a tortoise. It was a New Mexican who was the only man I ever heard divorce a polysyllable with an oath. I brought him word that a certain desperado was "hunting" him.

"Wal?" he growled.

"Wal!" I retorted, "I've ridden twenty miles to tell you, so he shouldn't catch you short."

"Wal, I'm under no obli-byGod-gation to you, sir, if you did, blankety blank!"

But he was only an Eastern man New Mexicanized. The natives are not guilty of such vague and meaningless blasphemy. They swear methodically, gracefully, fluently, comprehensively, homogeneously, eloquently, thoughtfully — I had almost said, prayerfully. They curse everything an inch high; they ransack the archives of history, and send forward a search-warrant into the dim halls of futurity, to make sure that nothing curseworthy escapes. But there is nothing brutal about it. It is courteous, tactful, musical, rapt — at times majestic. It carries a sense of artistic satisfaction.

It was providential that I had by now scraped some approximate acquaintance with that melodious tongue, for my Jehu knew not a word of English. All went well until we came to cross the tiny arroyo in the Portecito. Here we slumped suddenly in a quicksand. The hind wheels went down almost from sight, the front wheels and the oxen hung on the bluff farther bank — and then Tircio let go. A perfect gentleman, Tircio. A quiet, hard-working, honest boy whose dimpled babes at home tweak his thin beard by hours unchidden, and whose heart and home are open as the soul of New Mexican hospitality. But as an

exhorter of cattle — well, I believe the Recording Angel must have just given it up, after a bit, and dropped the ledger and gone away to rest. And the substance of his oration was in words and figures as follows, to wit: —

"*Malditos bueyes!* Of ill-said sires and dams! [Nothing intentional here.] *Malaia* your faces! Also your souls, bodies, and tails! [Crack!] That your fathers be accursed, and your mothers three times! [Crack!] Jump, then! May condemnation overtake your ears, and your brand-marks *tambien!* [Crack!] The Evil One take away your sisters and brothers, and the cousin of your grandmother! [Crack! Crack!] That the coyotes may eat your uncles and aunts! *Diablos!* [Crack!] Get out of this! Go, sons of sleeping mothers that were too tired to eat! *Como?* [Crack! Crack!] The fool that broke you, would that he had to drive you in *infierno*, with all your cousins and relations by marriage! [Crack!] Ill-said family, that wear out the yoke with nodding in it! Curse your tallow and hoofs! Would that I had a *chicote* of all your hides at once, to give you blows! [Crack!] *Malaia* your ribs and your knee-joints, and any other bones I may forget! Anathema upon your great-great-grandfathers, and everything else that ever wore horns! *Mal* — "

Here I interposed, for I was slowly freezing,

and Tircio was just beginning to get interested. Business before pleasure, always; and the first business was to send him for assistance. The last words I caught, as he trudged off to San Mateo through the storm, were: —

" — and your dewlaps and livers! And curse everything from here to Albuquerque and back four times! And — "

Then he faded into the night, while I tried to remember his adjectives to keep warm — for there was nothing wherewith to build a fire.

It was a bitter night there, too cold for sleeping, too stormy for anything else. I took Shadow into the sleeping-bag, and we kept each other from freezing — but only that. At last came the muffled beat of horse-hoofs; and in a moment more Tircio drew up beside the wagon with two stout allies. The freight was soon unloaded, the fresh horses soon helped the wagon out, and with my head on a soap-box I slept sweetly while we bumped over the roads and gullies to San Mateo.

There was the true Spanish hospitality — a universal welcome which the very name of the home betokens, for it is Sucasa, "Your Own House." The time passed very quickly with hunting and exploring by day, and filling the long winter evenings with song and quaint Spanish games with the cordial household. Three wintry days I spent

digging in a wonderful American Pompeii. Three-quarters of a mile from the Chaves homestead is a low, irregular mound, within a few rods of which one might pass without a suspicion of its interest. For the hundred years that mound has been known to civilized people, it kept its secret well hidden until 1884. But one day a savage windstorm gouged out a lot of sand from its flanks, and a passer noticed the top of a remarkable wall peeping out. Don Amado Chaves, eldest son of the brave old Colonel, and now Territorial Superintendent of Public Instruction, had excavations made which showed that the mound was the grave of an entire prehistoric pueblo — buried by the drifting sands of countless ages. The whole of the first story is still standing, though all the rooms were choked with debris from the walls of the second and third stories. The masonry is of stone, and wonderfully good. Down one of those time-tried walls the point of a spade slides as down a planed board. This was the first of the countless wonderful ruins in New Mexico with which I became familiar; and exploration of hundreds of others since has not destroyed my interest in that strange, buried, prehistoric city of the aborigine at San Mateo. The pueblo was built in one enormous fort-house in the shape of a rectangle inclosing a courtyard. The outer walls were nearly

two hundred feet long on a side, and about thirty to forty feet high. Not a door or loophole of any sort broke that wall, and the only access to the courtyard, upon which all the doors and "windows" opened, was by ladders which could be pulled up over the wall, thus leaving the inhabitants inside their strange stone box, very safe from any foes of their day. Even the doorways upon the little inner square, and those from room to room within, were so tiny that a foe already in the house could easily be overcome as he squeezed through — wee openings only about sixteen inches wide and three feet or less in height. In my excavations — for I shouldered a spade and dug there enthusiastically, as would any young American who had a chance — I uncovered several of these "toy" doors, which interested me greatly. I did not then know that these were the characteristic doorways of all ancient pueblo architecture, these harassed people preferring domestic inconveniences for the sake of greater safety against their innumerable foes; and I was quite ready to accept the theories of equally green folk (who, however, are not too modest to write "scientific" books) that such ruins were peopled by a race of dwarfs.

But despite the strength of its solid stone walls, this house-town of perhaps two hundred people

had met the fate of so many of the pueblos of the old days, and tragedy is written all across its mysterious ruins. The lower rooms (which are all perfect except as to roof) are choked with the debris of the upper ones — full of charred remnants of roof and rafter. The pueblo was taken in war, — doubtless by surprise, for it should easily have withstood any assault with the weapons of those days, and doubtless by the Navajos, who roamed thickest there, — many of its people were slain, and then the firebrand of the savage victors did its work and tumbled the ruined home upon the careless grave of the dead owners. There are many, many human bones under that ancient wreck, and Don Amado once dug up, in the largest room of all, the perfect skeleton of a woman, her long, silken, black hair still beautiful as in the forgotten days when she washed it at the little acequia (irrigating ditch) whose course can still be dimly traced along the valley. I found many arrowheads and implements of petrified wood and volcanic glass, a few finely made bone beads, and bushels of fragments of pottery, still beautifully bright of hue after all these centuries, and many other interesting relics.

The home-life of the lovable Mexican family with whom I spent those stormy but happy four days interested me greatly. The large, roomy,

comfortably appointed adobe house was as unlike a New England homestead as possible in all but the one thing — that it was *home;* and home not only for its people, but for their guests. The beds, covered with priceless Navajo blankets, were scrupulously neat; and so was everything else in the domestic economy. The food, though still new to me, was abundant and very good. The usual bill of fare included stews of mutton with rice, beef roasted in delicious cubes, beef shredded and stewed with the quenchless but delightful chile, *frijoles* (the brown beans of the Southwest) cooked as only a Mexican can cook them; white and graham bread of home-made flour not robbed of its nutrition by roller processes, and baked in little "shortened" cakes called *galletitas;* wine, perfect coffee, and canned fruits. All the baking was done in the big adobe beehives of ovens in the courtyard; the other cooking upon the kitchen stove. A dozen ever-amiable servants kept all the affairs of the extensive household in excellent shape. The large scale of housekeeping at such a *hacienda* may be inferred from the one item of coffee, of which 2500 pounds was consumed there yearly.

In the evenings we gathered in one of the big rooms, by the rollicking light of the adobe fireplace, and sang the sweet Spanish folk-songs, or

played happy, simple games. The old hero Don, wasted with disease from a hundred wounds and fifty years of incomparable hardships; his Madonna-faced wife, his very beautiful daughters and dashing sons, and cousins and friends, old and young — how the faces all come back to me now, though so many of the dearest sleep under the long shadow of the noble peak of San Mateo.

Among the quaint social games we played were many closely similar to the old-fashioned ones of New England. The play "*Floron*" (the ring) is very much the same as "Button, button, who's got the button?" except that a ring is the article hidden from hand to hand, and that a pretty Spanish couplet is sung throughout the game. "*El molino*" (the mill) is a version of the familiar game wherein the players are named after the various accessories of a mill. The leader tells a story and at the mention therein of any article the player meant thereby must rise and change his or her chair, and when "the mill is broken" all jump up and scramble for new seats. The "bullet" is something like "fishing for apples." A conical peak of flour is built upon a plate, and a leaden bullet balanced upon its apex. The players in turn take a table knife and cut away as much of the flour hill as possible without disturbing the bullet. The one who causes it to fall has to do

penance. The bullet is again placed on top of the cut pile and the loser has to pick it up with his teeth, an operation during which some one is sure to give the bent head a shove which thrusts his face deep into the flour. Forfeits figure largely in the games and are often comical, but never really unkind. A favorite is to order the penitent to make a speech wherein another player supplies the gestures. The second player stands behind the first with his arms under those of the victim, and carries on a most impressive gesticulation while the victim speaks. The end of the oration is generally wild laughter, for the hands take occasion to rub imaginary tears from the orator's face, and to leave thereon two broad smooches of lampblack. This trick, of course, is never played on ladies, whose forfeits are generally no more severe than the recitation of a *dicho* (a Spanish epigrammatic verse); or the blowing out of a candle, passed rapidly before their faces; or the giving of "three sighs for the one you love best." There is nothing like copenhagen or any of the similar old-fashioned rural games of the East. The strict Spanish decorum would never tolerate such innovations. But "the mill" and "the bullet" and "spinning the plate" and a hundred other diversions as childlike and as childishly enjoyed fully entertained us.

There is among the New Mexicans no St. Valen-

tine and no April Fool. Most of the young people of the Territory never even heard of these Saxon institutions. They have, however, a custom which seems to be a distant cousin to both, and that is the *dia de los Santos Inocentes*, the day of the Holy Innocents. It falls on January 28th, and is an occasion of as much mirth among the olive-skinned young folk of New Spain as February 14th and April 1st to Yankee boys and girls, being enjoyed by much older jokers than would nowadays condescend to such frivolities in the East.

On that day it is the ambition of every wide-awake young lady of the lonely little Mexican hamlets to *hacer á uno inocente* — to make some one an innocent. The methods employed for this jovial "fooling" are generally thus: We will suppose that Pedro is a young man of the village and Maria a mischievous maiden. On the morning of January 28th Pedro is busy with some duty, when a very small and very tattered messenger arrives at the house and delivers a note to him. Pedro has perhaps forgotten the day altogether, and, entirely unsuspecting, he reads: —

"APPRECIATED FRIEND: Will you do me the favor to lend me your horse to-day that I may take a *paseo?* Your friend,

"MARIA BACA."

"*Por supuesto,*" says the obliging Pedro; and going out into the fields with his rope he lassos a horse, bridles it, and sends it by the small envoy to Maria.

In a little time the boy returns with his hands full. In one is a broom — a tiny, cunning toy of a broom tied with a pretty ribbon — and a very wee cup of water to wet it in. In the other hand is a note, always in these words: —

"My Dear Friend: May God repay you for [being so] innocent. Here I send you a little broom and a little cup, that you may sweep off the innocence from yourself.

"With pleasant remembrances, your friend,

"Maria."

The cup of water goes with the miniature broom, after an old Spanish custom. The natives of New Mexico to this day use very few of our American brooms with handles. Their *escoba* is a thick wisp of broom-corn tied in a round sheaf, and sweeping with it requires one to bend half double. It is never used dry; the housewife always dips the end in a dish of water to lay the dust.

When Pedro has read this note, two facts dawn on him — first, that he has been made an *inocente*, and, second, that his horse is now a hostage to the

fair joker, and that he cannot recover it without the proper *desempeño* — atonement. He always takes the trick in good part and proceeds to redeem his horse by making some pretty present to Maria, or by promising to give a dance, with refreshments (chocolate, cakes, etc.), in her honor. This promise is always sacredly kept, and the ball ends in innocent hilarity the good-natured trick of the *Santos Inocentes*. The word *santos* is doubtless used of those who are befooled in token of the ancient feeling, still current among all Spanish peoples, that those of little wit are dear to and under the special protection of God, and therefore holy.

The practice of *desempeño* is a very ancient one in all Spanish countries, and figures in many quaint customs. Here, for instance, there is always the "redeeming" of a little girl after her first dance. Her parents, of course, accompany her to the ball — there is no escorting by beaux to such affairs, nor to any others, for Spanish young ladies. When the girl, be she sixteen or six, has completed her first dance, two elderly men, friends of the family, make an "arm-chair" by crossing each others' wrists, after a fashion familiar to our boyhood, lift the debutante thereon, and carry her in triumph to her parents to demand the *desempeño*. She is not released until the parents promise to

give a grand ball in honor of the friends "who captured the child," and when that festivity comes off she is belle of the occasion. In the remoter villages the "grand ball" is but a little dance in a clay-floored room, lit by flickering candles, and with no more orchestra than a blind old fiddler and an energetic youth with an accordeon. But simple and plain as it is, there is a thorough spirit of zest which is not always found in more brilliant gatherings.

Here at San Mateo, too, I formed my first acquaintance with those astounding fanatics, the Penitentes — an acquaintance which afterward came very near costing my life on several occasions. These ignorant perverters of a once godly brotherhood were formerly scattered all through New Mexico; but of late years have died out save in the remoter hamlets like San Mateo. Their only appearance as a religious brotherhood is during the forty days of Lent; but then they do penance for the sins of the whole year. Naked to the waist, their heads covered with a black bag like a hangman's cap, their bleeding bare feet guided by the "Brothers of Light," they make their awful processions, flaying their own bare backs with cruel scourges till the blood runs to their heels, bearing crosses of crushing weight or burdens of cactus lashed tight to the quivering flesh. And on Good

Friday they culminate with the actual crucifixion of one of their number, chosen by lot! Afterward I not only witnessed these ghastly scenes, but photographed them all, including the crucifixion. We read with a shiver of the self-tortures of East Indian fakeers, most of us ignorant that in the oldest corner of our own enlightened nation as astounding barbarities are still practised by citizens and voters of the United States.

My eyes were beginning to open now to real insight of the things about me; and everything suddenly became invested with a wondrous interest. It is not an inevitable thing. Thousands live for years beside these strange facts, too careless ever to see them; but the attention once secured never goes hungry for new interest. Years of study since have not worn out for me the fascination of the real inner meaning of this unguessed land — its history, its habits, and its mental processes. It is a world by itself — a land as much outside the United States ethnologically as within it geographically. Every pettiest act of life is new and strange to the intelligent man from the East — tinged sometimes with humor, sometimes with pathos, always with interest.

A trivial matter which is one of the first to strike the newcomer was more seriously impressed upon me here — and in later days has been so oft

reiterated as fairly to leave a scar on memory. That is, the liberty allowed stock in the Southwest. I do not refer to mining stock, — which is always too depressed to take advantage of any liberty, — but quadrupeds. The fence is a refinement of scepticism which has no place in the New Mexican economy; and stables are almost unheard-of. The faith of the country is sublime. The traveller camps indefinitely in a field four hundred miles square, and turns his horse loose on Space. The *ranchero*, just in from an eighty mile ride, and under bonds to make a similar *paseo* to-morrow, does likewise. For three hundred years the *paisano* has been nightly dismissing his stock with firm faith that in the opalescent dawn the animals will come knocking at the door to be saddled. For three hundred years he has been daily rising to look out upon a landscape bereft of quadrupedality; and to sally forth with a rope and provisions for a fortnight. As a rule, the horse is found before the provisions run out; and the few searchers who have starved had little pity. More than two weeks' rations of flour and bacon is too much to pay for a New Mexican horse, anyhow. Occasionally some sceptic thinks to supplement Providence by rawhide handcuffs on the forefeet of his Rosinante; but the impertinence is properly rebuked. The distance between here and Halifax that a hob-

bled horse cannot travel in a night would scarce make a promenade for a weary tumble-bug. Hobbles seem to add just the incentive the jaded bronco was looking for. Like all great souls, he loves to triumph over obstacles; and his triumph is apt to lap over into Utah. Nor have you got him when you find him. He knows that sudden joy is apt to be fatal — and he is no wilful homicide. It is his disposition to break it to you gently. Indeed, by the time you get him, your joy is so tempered that it would not be dangerous to a man with both feet in the grave.

The best way to catch a horse, under these circumstances, is with a six-shooter. Of course you then have to walk home, a few hundred miles; and you get no further good of the horse — but the satisfaction is cheap at double the money.

A like originality of method obtains in other processes of farm and fireside. As to milking, I shall never forget my first experience. Juan Rey had lassoed a yearling, with the other end of the rope tied to his waist; and had last been heard from down in Sierra County, still pleading with the steer to pause and consider. The place was therefore short by two maul-like but useful fists; and Don Amado came to me and said: —

"Can you milk?"

"Certainly I can milk."

"Well, I wish you'd come out and help us. There are only three men in the house, and I hate to tackle such a job short-handed."

We went out to the corral, fenced with tortuous trunks of cedar. The lair of the cow was there. So was Casimiro with a fifty-foot *reata*. Don Amado had brought a fence rail, but I was unarmed. The rest took off their coats, and I followed suit.

"Are you ready?" asked Don Amado with compressed lips.

Casimiro swung his noose, and dropped it deftly around the horns of the old sorrel. She seemed surprised, and expostulated; but at last we tripped her with the rail, and bound her hand and foot. I was lost in astonishment at this programme, but refrained from advertising myself.

The cow was now pried to her feet and leaned against the side of the corral, being blindfolded with my bandanna. We had failed to provide a gag — which I regretted shortly afterward when she gave me a dimple where I could take no real pride in showing it.

Just as I had the milking well in hand the rope broke. Casimiro was let in on the mud floor, I was bucked into the horsepond, and the cow began to scale the fence. She started out well, but the posts were too high for her sequel, and there she

hung, a bovine see-saw. Then was the hour of our triumph. Her hind feet were at once anchored to the posts, and we three hung on her horns to keep that end down while poor, crippled Madalena hobbled out and did the milking. This done, we had only to chop down the fence, ease up our ropes, and let old sorrel go. Simplest thing in the world, when you know how. It seemed a bit complicated then, but I soon recovered from my surprise. With immaterial variations, that is the orthodox way to milk a New Mexican country cow.

XIII

TERRITORIAL TYPES

Mexican Superstitions. — Patapalo's Encounter with the Original Serpent. — A Meeting with the Devil. — A New Companion. — An Unwilling Suicide. — The Rock Springs Rancho. — A Crucifix in Petticoats. — Burros. — The Census of the Saints. — The New Garden of the Gods. — The "Bad Man" and his Armament.

Getting back at last to the railroad, after those happy and instructive days at hospitable San Mateo, I was busy a couple of days at Grant's packing my Acoma relics, nuggets, pelts, and other curios to be shipped to Los Angeles; and had time to form some instructive acquaintances. Here I ran across a quaint old Mexican who was my first point of contact with the remarkable superstitions of his people. Witchcraft is firmly believed in throughout New Mexico to-day; and by no one more devoutly than by poor Francisco Cordoba, better known as Patapalo, or "Peg-leg." He has good grounds for the faith that is in him; for

years ago one of the three live *brujas* of San Rafael — whom I had the pleasure of photographing later — bewitched him, and twisted his legs so horribly that he scarce can walk. And that has not been his only experience with the supernatural. Years ago, when he lived in Socorro, he had a very remarkable adventure, as I have heard from his own lips.

A friend said to him one day: "Patapalo, why are you so stupid? Come with me to-night and I will make you the wisest man in the world — so that you can play any music, talk any language, know what happens a hundred miles away." Patapalo demurred at first, but consented after long solicitation. What occurred is best told in his own words — or rather in an exact translation of them.

"That night, it might be eight o'clock, José came for me, and we started walking across the plain. After we had gone a matter of a half hour we found 10,000 mesquite bushes. I was often there before, but never saw a single mesquite. I said, 'What is this thing?' but José said, 'Keep your tongue to your teeth and come on.' Then I saw that each bush had a rosary hanging on it. I was to speak, but at the moment we came to a door, very great, and with an iron lock. José knocked. A voice within replied, 'Who comes?' José said, 'We are two. One is ignorant.' Then

the door opened itself, and we went into a room, so large I could not see the end of it. It was very light and I saw hundreds of people. The men were on the one side of the room and the women on the other side. Many of them I knew, from Socorro and other places. In the middle were hundreds of musicians with all classes of instruments — many such as I never saw before. Then the musicians went to play very fine music, and the men and women danced together.

"Such fine dancers I have never, never seen. Then a very large goat came in and spoke to all, and everybody had to kiss him. And when the goat had gone there was a snake — of larger body than mine — came in upright. And it came to every man and wound itself around him and put its tongue in his mouth, and the same to every woman. And when he did so they talked words which I could not understand. But when he came to me and put his face before mine, my heart left me, and I cried, 'Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, save me!' And at the instant I was standing alone in the plain and the snake was gone, and the people and José, and there was only a strong smell of *asufre*. I walked home a long way very much alarmed. Next day I saw José and he said, 'Fool! The snake was ready to give you the tongue of wisdom, but you called the holy name and ruined

all.' He wanted me to go again, but I was afraid and never did. No, I had not been drinking a drop since many weeks."

Every old-time *paisano* remembers, too, the experience of Ambrosio Trujillo — now gone to his long account. He was sadly addicted to liquor, and his oaths generally took the form of an invocation to Satan. One fine moonlight night as Ambrosio was reeling homeward, he stubbed his toe, and angrily cried "that the devil take me!" Instantly his Sulphurous Majesty sprang from the heart of a rock close by with a polite "*Buenas noches,* amigo! what wilt thou?"

"Come, take a drink with me," replied Ambrosio, nothing abashed.

"Thanks!" said Satan, "but I never drink."

Ambrosio came nearer, — he was, drunk or sober, a fearless man, — and the devil suddenly vanished, leaving only a strong smell of brimstone. He had human form, but his eyes and mouth were living fire. Ambrosio went home a changed man. From that time on he never dared go out at night; and to the hour of his death, three years afterward, he never drank another drop.

Side by side with these quaint phases of native life and thought I found as interesting types of the practical and unconventional. The 99,000 acre rancho of the Acoma Land and Cattle Com-

pany touches Grant's; and then and there began friendships with some of its cowboys, which have since brought many pleasant experiences. They were not all rough men, — some had more than the average education, — but the roughest *were* men. Poor, brave, loyal Frank West, whose life was pitched out lately by a bucking bronco, was a man of uncommon parts. He was an unmitigated cowboy, but a well educated one — a clergyman's son who had drifted into this wild life not from wildness, but for health. His speech was a Joseph's coat of many colors — with remnants of the college slang around which had accreted a wonderful conglomerate of the breezy idiom of the frontier. He was the terror of cattle thieves, but never quarrelsome — a quiet, gentle, unpretentious hero, and with a keen eye to the humorous side.

When Shadow and I started west again from Grant's, we had acquired a new companion and a much worse one than weak-kneed but kind-hearted Phillips. It was a Pennsylvania sewing-machine agent whom we will call Locke. He had seen in the Albuquerque papers something about our journey, and got off the cars at Grant's to accompany us. He had left a dollar or two, and a great wealth of confidence, and nearly "talked our ears off." He was a gentleman of chronic woes, and in the first hour of acquaintance told me sorrows

enough to have swamped the Great Eastern had she tried to carry them all.

For the first few miles the walking, though bad, was not seriously so; but we were fast climbing the Continental Divide, gaining about one hundred feet in altitude with every mile — and with every mile progress grew more difficult. By noon we were in six-inch snow; and this grew continually deeper, until it was almost to our knees. We cooked lunch over a fire of chips, hacked with my hunting-knife from a dead cedar, and pushed on. Shadow was enjoying himself hugely, for the country was alive with cotton-tails, and in the deep snow he caught several; but we bipeds were not quite so happy. My companion, having told all his hoarded troubles, now found new ones to engage his attention. He kept wishing he were dead, and at last declared that he would kill himself if he only knew how! It was very hard to keep from laughing; but with a very solemn face I handed him one of my six-shooters, saying: "Here, help yourself! You are quite right!" But he gave me a look of ineffable reproach, pushed away the proffered panacea for his woes, and declared that he didn't see how people could be such heartless brutes! As night came on matters looked rather gloomy. It had become very cold, the snow was full knee-deep, and we were wet, cold, and hungry.

At last, when it was quite dark, the man of woes sat down in the snow and refused to go any farther. I tried to cheer him up, for Chaves could not be more than five miles ahead; but he declared that he would not budge another inch — he was going to die right there — and began to cry like a child. It is a dreadful thing to hear a man cry, even when you feel contempt for his tears; and for a moment I even thought of taking him up forcibly and carrying him. But as he weighed one hundred and seventy pounds and I one hundred and forty-five that was out of the question.

Just then I caught the blessed glimmer of a light among the piñons only a few hundred yards away. Even this did not serve to start Locke, and I had to get him up by brute force and some very savage threats. We stumbled through the snow to a poor little Mexican ranch-house, where the courteous owner and his huge wife were very kind. They toasted us before the blazing mud fire-place and turned themselves out of bed to give a comfortable couch to two bedraggled, disreputable-looking strangers; and then that foolish Locke lay awake all night, fearing that if he went to sleep our hosts would cut our throats for his dollar. Poor Juan Arragon and poor fat wife! They long ago went to a world where I hope they were as hospitably cared for as they cared for us. In the morning

they gave us the last morsel in the shabby little home, and proudly declined my proffered money. Their hospitality was not for sale — it was from the heart, as with all their kindly race. I shall not soon forget the Rock Springs ranch; nor its bright boy, rejoicing in the startling name — common enough among his people — of Jesus Maria; nor its score of mongrel curs who sore beset poor Shadow; nor even its curious crucifixes. Upon the walls were four or five little bronze statuettes, representing the Saviour upon the cross, naked save for the customary cloth about the loins. Somehow, though, this was not quite up to the Mexican ideas of propriety, so around the waist of each figure they had put a funny little frilled calico petticoat!

And "Paloma," the snow-white burro at Rock Springs, reminds me that I have been shamefully long in coming to that corner-stone of New Mexican independence, the burro. This pocket edition of the donkey is one of the most interesting natives and ornaments of the Southwest. He is a shade larger than the jackrabbit, and as strong as a horse. It is no rare thing to see a half-cord of wood, or a quorum of a ton of hay meandering across the aimless New Mexican landscape. This is apt to puzzle the stranger, but the native accepts it without astonishment. A careful analysis always shows a

base of burro in the mass. As a pack-beast he is matchless — patient, strong, sure-footed as a mountain-sheep. As a saddle animal, he is intermittent but advantageous. He cannot help the size of his ears; and they are no mean shelter to the rider. If you get saddle-weary, you just put your feet down and let him walk on from under. If *he* were to tire, you could put a shawl-strap on him and take him home. I have never known this necessity to arise; but those who have ridden that noble animal, the horse, on these Southwestern plains and have had now and then to walk home and "pack" the saddle, will appreciate this advantage. So you get your animal back to camp, it really matters little whether you take him as a seat or as hand-baggage. If his face be a fair index, the burro is the wisest thing in the creation — an owl looks the greenhorn beside him. He is also the sleepiest. He sometimes lies down for a nap, but that is needless. He can sleep equally well standing or in putative motion. And yet, when he runs wild, — as he does in herds of several hundred, in some remote localities, — the fleetest horse can barely overhaul him in a long chase. And when young, and particularly when furred with cockle-burs, he is the "cunningest" thing on earth.

It is an error to deem him stupid. He is like his master — a deal wittier than he looks. We

hear little of New Mexican humor; but an Irishman could hardly have bettered the famous "Census of the Saints."

A Frenchman, settled in New Mexico, fell in dispute with a native as to which nation had the more saints.

"*Pero,*" said the Mexican at last, "already makes an hour that we argue ourselves without to finish nothing. *Vamos!* To the proof! That we seat ourselves here joined. Then name thou thy saint and pull out for him a hair of my chin, and I will do the same. So, *poco pronto,* we shall count and see to whom are more of saints."

"*C'est bien.* Saint Sulpice," said the Frenchman, plucking a hair from his adversary's beard and laying it upon the table.

"San Juan," retorted the Mexican, in kind.

"Sainte Marie." (A hair.)

"Santa Ana." "

"Saint Marc." "

"San Pablo." "

So it went for ten minutes. Then the exasperated Mexican ended the argument and his tally-sheet by wrenching a whole fistful from the chin of the Gaul with a triumphant yell of "*Los doce apostolos de una vez!*" [1]

The snow grew deeper and deeper as we toiled

[1] "The Twelve Apostles at once!"

up the grade next day. At noon we stood upon the crest of the Continental Divide — that vast water-shed, 7297 feet above the sea, from whose eastern slope the rain-drops find their way to the Gulf of Mexico, while those upon the western side are borne to the Pacific Ocean.

Six miles down hill brought us to Coolidge and the first mail I had had in a month. This was the only town of one hundred people (except the Indian pueblos) between Albuquerque and Winslow, nearly three hundred miles. Beyond Coolidge the mud and slush soon became awful to contemplate, and we had to walk all day upon the ends of the ties, which were generally clear on the south side of the track. I had a good time all the morning picking up beautiful petrifactions, both of shells and wood, and again my pockets began to appear like anvils in size and weight. We passed the little town of Gallup, famous for its great deposits of bituminous coal, and sustained entirely by the miners. The shafts are some three miles north of town, and are reached by a track whose grade is over three hundred feet to the mile. Here we left behind the remarkable red sandstone mesas which skirt the road all the way from Bluewater, and which form a glorious panorama that is aptly termed "the New Garden of the Gods." It does indeed recall the Garden at

Manitou, being of the same radiant hue and much the same formation, but is on a vastly more stupendous scale, though less grotesque in architecture. For fifty miles the red, rocky wall runs on, usually parallel with the track, and three to thirty miles from it, in picturesque, broken, ever-varying bluffs, two hundred to five hundred feet in height. Their usual form is that of rectangular or square blocks, hundreds of feet in each dimension, and fronting toward the track almost as regularly as a row of business buildings. A few, particularly at the eastern end, are eroded into terraced castles; and others have assumed more strange and irregular shapes. But the finest easily accessible freaks of this strange gallery are a short distance west of Wingate. From the fort itself one notes two small, peculiar, twin pinnacles, rising above an intervening ridge. As one walks on down the track from the station, the baffling ridge slowly fades away, and soon one stands in wonder before that strange piece of nature's architecture — "the Navajo church." Back half a mile from the dress-parade of red-coated giants it stands — a vast cathedral hewn aptly from the solid rock by Time's patient hand. You see it all there; the vast bulk of nave and transept, of pillar, arch, and dome; while in the middle front, exactly as human art could have placed it, soars aloft the dizzy

tower with its slender pinnacles. Here the soft gray sandstone comes out in exquisite contrast to the deep prevailing red. Just beyond the church is "Pyramid Rock," a curious, conical peak, highest of all the mesas, and beautiful in hue and contour. This strange wall parts company with the railroad near Gallup, but by no means ends here. Its ruby cliffs run across clear to the big Colorado River, with breaks and variations, and far up north into the Navajo Reservation, full of strangely beautiful freaks of form and color. Among their curious parks are found the beautiful Navajo garnets, some of which are handsome as rubies; the pretty olivines, and other semi-precious stones. These are not dug up by the prospector, but mined exclusively by very small, very red, and very pugnacious six-legged miners — namely, by the ants. Their tall hills are the original and aboriginal garnet diggings; and among their little "dumps" of tiny pebbles I have picked up many a clear pigeon-blood garnet and light green olivine, and one precious pellet of an emerald. The Navajos — whose reservation lies north of the track and parallel with it for fifty miles here — gather and bring in these stones by the handful and sell them to the traders. Most of them are small; but I have seen a perfect one of twenty-five carats. One of the right color, free from flaws,

and large enough to cut in carbuncle, is a beautiful and a very valuable gem. There are also fine topazes. None of the higher gems have ever been found in New Mexico — unless we except the famous Cañon de Tsayee [generally miscalled du Chelly] swindle of a few years ago, when two French sharpers salted that lonely and distant cañon with South African diamonds, bought up the expert who was sent out, and got $200,000 out of their scheme before the rascality was exposed.

There was little else of interest until Manuelito, the last station in New Mexico, except a curious coward who kept an Indian trading-post at Defiance. On a shelf which went around under the whole long counter of his stone store, he had more than a hundred loaded and cocked rifles and six-shooters; and he took great delight in showing how rapidly he could whirl from the goods on the high shelves, snatch a firearm in each hand, and "throw down" on us — a rather risky object lesson. He was, as one might see at first glance, a real specimen of a class now happily about extinct — a man about five-feet-ten in height, of heavy and muscular frame, a face with regular but hard features, the neck of a bull, and the under jaw of a terrapin; dressed in a soiled percale shirt and bell-bottomed pants fringed with solid silver but-

tons down the outside of each leg. He was the utmost type of the "holy terror" of the West, the "Ba-ad Man from Bodie," the "Howling Wolf from the headwaters of Bitter Creek." The most fanciful eastern correspondent could not exaggerate — if he could fairly do justice to — this Man of Gore. His only conversation was of shooting and cutting, and of "what a holy time" he had killing off enough Navajos to keep the rest humble; illustrating how he would pump any one who molested him so full of lead that some tenderfoot would come along and locate a claim there; and in general letting us know what a "terror on wheels" he was. Poor Locke listened with his chin dropping, and Shadow kept to a modest corner. But his status was plain enough. He was merely some eastern hoodlum, out here for two or three years, living in constant terror of the Navajos and tramps, which he endeavored to conceal by murderous talk and braggadocio. A few Indians came in to trade, and he bullyragged and browbeat them unmercifully. A rather handsome young Navajo named John, employed to herd his cattle, came in from the cold day's ride, and was abused and reviled as few men ever were. Then Smith told me how a former servant had, upon being discharged, broken into the store during his absence, and stolen $300 worth of goods. Smith and a

companion saddled their horses and set out in pursuit as soon as a traitorous Navajo, tempted by reward, revealed the hiding-place of his fellow. They came back with the stolen goods and a blanket rolled around a vest and pair of pants, stiff with gore. They had "found the cuss where he got sorry and committed suicide."

"What," said I, "a Navajo commit suicide for remorse at stealing?"

"Ya-as," answered the bad man, "an' I'll give some more of the —— the same chance to kill themselves if they ain't —— careful." Then he had the effrontery to show me that hideously besmeared clothing, with a round hole on the left flap of the breast and back. There was not a grain of powder in it, and that showed that the fatal ball came from a distance. The truth of the story is, as I learned, that Smith and his chum overtook the young thief, and with a single bullet settled both him and his horse. They cut off the Indian's clothes, leaving the poor devil on the frozen ground in November. He lived for nineteen days, having been found by Indians and taken to his *hogan*.

The oral desperado's dreadful talk was to impress us and scare us out of any possible burglarious scheme.

He did not dare to let us sleep in the store, so

we went over to a little ranch building hard by, along with his clever assistant. The wind whistled through big cracks, and I could see the sky in a dozen places overhead, but we slept very warmly, nevertheless, under many blankets and an old wagon-sheet spread upon the floor.

XIV

WITH THE NOMADS

Among the Navajos. — Strange Indians. — Wandering Jewelers. — Barbaric Silver and Costly Blankets. — Mysterious Beads. — A Navajo Matrimonial Agency. — Over a Cliff.

At Manuelito Locke said his shoes were getting thin, and he guessed he'd take the cars. Phillips had walked thirty-eight miles with me, and Locke seventy-eight. His departure was a relief, for Shadow alone was much better company. Here I scraped an interesting acquaintance with the Navajos, and acquired a load of their characteristic treasures — including a lot of the barbaric silver bracelets, belt-disks, earrings, etc., and a magnificent blanket of their matchless weaving. Although among the most savage aborigines of the West, the Navajos excel in two semi-civilized industries. They number about twenty thousand. Their reservation, lying part in northwestern New Mexico and part in northeastern Arizona, is a huge wilderness

without towns or houses, but dotted here and there with their little corn-patches and rude, lone *hogans* — temporary tent-shaped huts of logs and earth. They are absolute nomads, and never stay long in one *hogan* — and will never enter it again when death has once been in it. They are the wealthiest nomad Indians in the United States, and perhaps in the world. Their enormous herds of inbred but tireless and beautiful ponies — descendants of the Arab horses brought by the Spanish, for there were no horses in either America before the conquest — are not their only riches. They have great wealth of the superb blankets of their own weaving; a hundred thousand head of cattle, and a million and a half of sheep, and vast store of silver ornaments of their own manufacture.

Silver is the only metal used by either Pueblo or Navajo for purposes of ornamentation. For gold they have no use whatever; and it is only those approximate to the railroad and therefore conversant with white man's ways, that will even receive Uncle Sam's yellow *dinero*. Their supply of silver is now drawn almost exclusively from civilized coin.

The silversmith among either Pueblos or Navajos is a person of mighty influence. Upon his inventive and mechanical skill, each aborigine depends for the wherewithal to cut an imposing figure at

the feast-day dance or the bet-staggering horse-race. His tools are simple, not to say crude. A hammer or two, a three-cornered file, a rude iron punch, and a primitive arrangement for soldering, comprise his outfit. If a Pueblo, one of the neat little rooms in his house, equipped with a little bench, serves him for a workshop; if a Navajo, his smithy is under the alleged shelter of his *hogan;* and a smooth stone is his work-bench.

The simplest form of silver ornament is the button, a decoration of which both races are immensely fond. Neither of them uses the button in its legitimate role of constrained intimacy with a buttonhole. Some of them wear American vests with American buttons, but the home-made silver button is reserved solely for purposes of decoration and not of repression. It serves to set off moccasin, legging, belt, pistol-belt, gun-scabbard, saddle and bridle, and also the little leathern pouch which goes in lieu of pockets. The commonest button is made from a silver dime, strongly arched, polished smooth, and with a tiny eyelet soldered down in the concavity of the under side, far beyond the reach of a needle, and therefore fastenable only by a wee thong of buckskin. These dime buttons are largely used in decorating the edges of a broad strap or similar article. Buttons made of a twenty-five cent piece and those from a half dollar are

more worn as simple ornaments, at knees or throat. I have seen a venerable Navajo with twenty buttons fastened to the welt-seam of each legging; each button made of a quarter, and with the die perfect on each, despite the rounded form. From plain buttons to ornamented ones is but a step. The simplest design is made by filing a number of concentric rays upon a button; and from this, up to really elaborate work, there are designs of all sorts.

Akin to the buttons are the striking belt-disks which glisten upon every well-to-do Pueblo and Navajo on festal occasions. These are always circular, slightly arched, average four inches in diameter, are handsomely made, and average $3 in weight. From eight to a dozen of these are worn, strung upon a narrow thong as a belt. Some ultra-dandies have a shoulder-belt of them besides.

In horse-trappings, the well-to-do Navajo is particularly gorgeous. Besides a large weight of sundry silver ornaments on his saddle, his "Sunday" bridle is one mass of silver, and but an infinitesimal fraction of the leather substratum is visible. It is nothing uncommon to see $40 to $60 weight in silver on one bridle. The straps are covered with silver sheaths, and more or less heavy pendants dangle upon the foretop and from the bits. The Pueblos occasionally thus be-silver their bri-

dles, but are not as daft about the custom as are the Navajos.

The most popular form of jewelry with both races is the bracelet. In early days it had its useful as well as its ornamental adaptation. To protect the left wrist from the vicious sting of the bow string, the men very commonly wore a broad wristlet of leather, tied at one side with a buckskin thong. Those who were able to afford it put a silver disk on the upper side of this, making a very striking bracelet. Specimens of these, however, are now extremely rare. It was my good fortune at Manuelito to acquire an ancient Zuñi wristlet, its silver top rudely engraved with the sacred image of the full-rayed sun; but I have never since been able to duplicate it.

Ordinarily, however, with both races the bracelet is merely ornamental, and is worn equally by men and women. From one to a dozen may be seen on a single wrist, but the average number is about three. The simplest bracelets — commonest with the Navajos — are simply round circlets, generally tapering a little to the ends, and marked with little file-cut lines. A silver dollar is usually entirely used up in hammering one of them out. A step higher are the flat bands now more in vogue. The Pueblos tend to light ones, and the Navajos to heavy. I have one made by Chit-Chi,

the best silversmith of the Navajos, which is an inch and a half wide in its greatest breadth, and weighs $3. Some of these band bracelets are still ornamented with a file, but the prettiest are figured by countless punchings with a little die. The Pueblo silversmiths have invented two designs peculiar to themselves, and sometimes solder a very chaste relief design upon the smooth band, and sometimes tip the ends with little balls. Neither of these customs has been followed by their cruder neighbors on the west. Indeed, the average of Pueblo workmanship in silver is far above that of the Navajos; and some of it is really beautiful.

Next to the bracelet in importance, and also worn by both sexes, is the earring. It doesn't hurt aboriginal ears to suffer, and one general characteristic of New Mexican native ear-gear is its generous weight. The commonest design is a simple, file-marked silver wire bent to a circle, and with one end filed smaller than the other. The wearers take off their earrings but rarely; and the ends of the stiff wire are brought together in the ear with a few hammer-taps. A favorite earring is a smooth wire circle with a sliding silver ball on it. Others are made flat. This about covers the Navajo line of ingenuity, but the Pueblo craftsmen devise some decidedly clever designs. A Zuñi smith made a very complicated

affair with two native emerald knobs in the lower extremities; and a pair of Acoma earrings are graceful crescents with an attempt at filigree filling. Both these rather uncommon specimens fasten with a hinged catch.

Beads of some sort are indispensable to the happiness of either Pueblo or Navajo, and only three varieties are used — coral, silver, and shell. The coral necklaces are of the very best, — it is impossible to palm off on them an inferior quality, — are long enough to go from two to six times around the neck in a loose loop, and sometimes cost as high as $100. Trinkets of any sort are very seldom hung to a coral necklace. These are bought, of course, from the American traders. Shell necklaces are the most common, and are highly prized. The most valuable are of unknown antiquity and of an unknown shell, thin, pinkish, and cut into little disks about one-fourth of an inch in diameter. The commoner ones are made from a heavier and pinker shell. Where these shells come from, no one knows. There is a fortune awaiting the white man who can find out. On shell necklaces it is common to hang turquoise pendants every two or three inches. These turquoise beads are oblong or flat pear-shaped, about half an inch to an inch in length, and are sometimes valued at several horses apiece. All the

aboriginal tribes of the Southwest put an enormous value on the turquoise, and it was their chief prehistoric currency. Most of it is too green to be valuable in the eastern market, but specimens have been taken out as fine as the costliest Persian stone. It is used by the native tribes in ornaments of nearly every sort.

The prettiest necklaces are of silver. They contain from thirty to one hundred round, hollow beads from one-fourth to three-fourths of an inch in diameter. The best specimens have a three or four inch cross pendant in front, and a wee cross strung after every second or third bead. The beads average ten cents in price, and the crosses fifteen cents. How the native workmen, with their rude tools, make hollow beads so perfectly, is a marvel.

Finger-rings are a little less numerous, but still common enough, and remarkable skill is often displayed in their workmanship. Plain round rings — of the American matrimonial pattern — are almost unknown here, the fashion being in chased bands and sets. The Navajos set native garnets or turquoise in rude box settings; and the Acoma smith sometimes makes a curious attempt at a crown setting. One of the most notable native rings I have ever found here was made for me later by Chit-Chi as a token of affection, and

entirely on his own device. It is of the nature of a cameo ring, the "cameo" being cut from an American dollar, with the Liberty head protuberant upon it. I have also some specimens of excellent inlaid work in these metals.

A silver ornament peculiar to the Pueblos is the dress-pin worn by the women. Their dresses are something like blankets, worn over one shoulder and under the other, reaching just below the knees, and fastened down the right side with huge pins. These are sometimes brass, but generally of silver, made by soldering two or three twenty-five or fifty cent pieces upon a pin. Sometimes the coins are left intact; sometimes polished and chased. I have seen a really elegant one, made of a polished and concave dollar, covered with relief work and set with imitation opal from a cheap American piece of trumpery.

The results of a mixture of native workmanship with American ideas are sometimes curious. Chit-Chi, who is a brother of the famous old ex-chief of the Navajos, Manuelito, — for whom the station is named, — is a very clever fellow and has done some very fair work for a few American patrons. The universal rule is with Pueblo and Navajo smiths to charge as much for the work as for the silver. For instance, if you give them a silver dollar for the material for a breast-pin you will have to give

them another for their labor — and so on up. Chit-Chi is a short but powerfully formed man of pleasant and intelligent face. Among my Indian friends here was also Klah (the "Left-Handed"), a bronze giant, with whom I afterward had some very amusing adventures. He is another brother of Manuelito.

Having caught up, at Manuelito, with my correspondence, I strolled up over the mesas. A mile or so from the station, I came upon a Navajo *hogan*. A superb blanket was being made on the rude loom; a stolid-blinking wahboose lay in a corner strapped upon a board and swathed till only its fat face and bead-like eyes were visible; an old woman was washing out her hair in a big *olla*, her sister was tanning a buckskin, and her daughter was making bread.

The daughter was a real Navajo belle, about fifteen years old, clean, bright, and decidedly pretty. The old woman could speak a little fractured Mexican, and I said to her in that tongue, "That your girl?"

"Yes."

"What'll you take for her?"

"*Diez caballos*" (ten horses), answered the crone, holding up her ten fingers, "*'sta muncho bonita.*"

I admitted that the girl was *bonita*, but I didn't have the ten horses with me to-day, and guessed I

would not buy. She did not come down in her price, but kept reiterating that the girl was both *buena* and *bonita*. Such is maternal affection among the Navajos — so different from our Christian mothers, who never think of wealth, title, or position, but always of the moral virtues and intellectual decorations of a prospective son-in-law! This slave-market system is the ordinary matrimonial etiquette among the barbarous Navajos. Their civilized neighbors, the Pueblos, would never think of such an atrocity.

The most striking thing among the Navajos is their blanket-weaving. They have taken it up since the Conquest, — for there were neither sheep nor sheep-wool in America until the Spaniards came, — and indeed learned it from the Pueblos. In prehistoric times they wove only cotton tunics. But now the teacher has given up weaving, and the pupil has gone far ahead. The Navajos make the most durable, and handsomest, and the costliest blankets in the world; and from them down to the cheapest and ugliest. I have in my collection blankets worth $200 apiece, which took a solid twelve-month in the weaving, and will hold water. The Navajo "loom" is a curious affair. A smooth branch is suspended by thongs from the roof of the *hogan;* and close to the floor is another, attached to the first by stout cords, and weighted with rocks

so as to keep a proper tension. The stout cords of the warp are then stretched between these two at regular intervals; and squatting before this rude loom Mrs. Navajo weaves in the woof by hand, a thread at a time, crowding each thread down tight with a hardwood batten stick.

Beyond the beautiful mesas which are just west of Manuelito the valley of the Rio Puerco of the West begins to narrow, as the creek has to pass through a small range of hills. All along here we see big bands of sheep and horses, grazing contentedly amid the saffrony sage; and off to one's side one's eye may usually catch a tiny barbaric figure — a Navajo youngster, guarding the stock. It is comical enough to see that seven or eight year old tot — clothed in a single cotton garment, which combines the attractions of the ballroom and the ballet, being extremely brief at both ends — standing out there on the lonely plains as sole guard over two hundred to five hundred sheep and goats; but apparently no whit worried or lonesome.

It is painful to recall the day after I left Manuelito and crossed the line into Arizona, for thenceforth the whole tramp was an experience one would not care to repeat, though it is well to have had it once. The walking was still atrocious. We had passed Billings with a hasty look at the wonderful

petrified forest, where the ground for miles is covered with giant trunks and brilliant chips of trees that are not only stone, but most splendid stone, agate of every hue, with crystals of amethyst and smoky topaz — and camped in a deserted Navajo *hogan*. Starting out in the raw, gray dawn, we soon crossed the fresh trail of a deer. The animal had gone up a "draw," and thinking to head him off, I started to climb the precipitous face of a fifty-foot mesa of shale. Shadow sat whining below, and watched as I climbed cautiously the crumbling ledges. Half-way up, as my weight came upon a jutting shelf, it suddenly broke beneath my feet. The ledge to which I was holding crumbled too; and in a shower of rock I fell back sprawling through the air and landed upon the jagged debris twenty feet below, and knew no more.

XV

A STREAK OF LEAN

A Broken Arm. — The Pleasures of Self-Surgery. — Fifty-two Miles of Torture. — Winslow. — The Difficulties of a Transcontinental Railroad. — A Frank Advertisement. — The Parson and the Stolen Cattle.

When life came back to me, Shadow was licking my face and whining plaintively. My whole body was afire with pain, and here and there were red drops upon the rocks and snow and upon my clothing. My left arm was doubled under me and twisted between two rocks, and when at last I mustered strength and courage to rise, it was to make a serious discovery. That arm — always my largest and strongest — was broken two inches below the elbow, and the sharp, slanting, lower end of the large bone protruded from the lacerated flesh. Here was a bad job — an ugly fracture, and so far from any medical help that the arm would probably be past saving before I could get there.

I thought very hard for a few moments. There was but one thing to be done — the arm was to be put in shape right there.

I placed the discolored hand between my feet and tried thus to tug the bone back to its place; but flesh and blood could not stand it. Ah! The strap of my discarded canteen! It was very long and broad and strong leather — just the thing! I gave it two flat turns about the wrist, and buckled it around a cedar tree. Beside the tree was a big squarish rock. Upon this I mounted, facing the tree; set my heels upon the very edge, clenched my teeth and eyes and fist, and threw myself backward very hard. The agony, incomparably worse than the first, made me faint; but when I recovered consciousness the arm was straight and the fracture apparently set — as indeed it proved to be. I cut some branches, held them between my teeth, trimmed them with the hunting-knife, and made rude splints. And then with Shadow, who had been as tenderly and tactfully sympathetic as a brother through it all, plodding mournfully at my side and heedless of the rabbits, I staggered back toward the railroad.

Ah, the torture of that walk! Cut and bruised from head to foot; that agonizing arm quivering to the jar of every footstep; weak with pain and loss of blood, with cold, wet feet slipping in the

muddy snow — a thousand years could not drown the memory of that bitter 6th of January.

At the track I found an old spike-keg; and one of the broad staves, cut in halves crosswise and trimmed a little, made good splints which never came off until the arm was well.

It was a serious problem at first what to do; but after thinking it all over, I decided to keep on. It is not pleasant to walk with a broken arm, but neither is it pleasant to be in bed with one. It would be a shame to give up the tramp already so rich in interest and experience; and it would be quite as easy after all to keep walking and bear the pain and get whatever distraction I might, than to go home by rail and then have the pain for company. And so I walked the remaining seven hundred miles to Los Angeles with the broken arm slung in a bandanna. Afterwards I had plenty of chance to learn handiness with one hand; for in 1888 a stroke of paralysis rendered this same left arm powerless, and for three years and seven months — until its complete recovery in '91 — I never moved a finger of it. But a dead arm is a less ill-natured companion than a broken one, and with time and practice the right hand grew fully adequate to the tasks of my home in the wilderness — to the use of rifle and shot-gun, the climbing of cliffs, the building of log houses, the making of thousands of

photographs, even the breaking of my own broncos. But I cannot say that the earlier fracture was as easy to be borne.

For that day it was necessary to push on to where there would be care if I should need it, and to get to the money awaiting me in the post-office at Winslow, for I had but a dollar left. And from the treacherous cliff to Winslow I walked without rest. Of that hideous fifty-two miles there is but dim recollection in me. I remember a wet, sullen landscape of widening valleys and diminishing hills; a muddy river fringed with scant cotton-woods; now and then a lonely section-house at one of which I got a lunch of bread and butter; a slow track-walker who spoke to me kindly; a ceaseless yell of coyotes; the occasional blur and roar of a passing train; the cold, drenching rain all day, and the shivering night; and through all a burden of aching legs and bursting head and that ever-present arm. When at last the little "Arizona Central" hotel at Winslow welcomed me to its shabby fare, I had been walking for thirty continuous hours, and in a little more than forty-eight hours past had walked one hundred and fifteen miles.

The accommodating postmaster filled my big duck pockets with welcome mail; and after a ravenous dinner and a short sleep I was all right,

though weak and a bit tremulous. I was thoroughly happy, in that receptive condition where one can understand what comfort really is — and who doesn't know how to appreciate that blessing has only half lived. Fire means nothing to a man who has never been half-frozen, nor food to him who has never been half-starved.

And now filled, and warmed, and rested, a fragrant regalia from thoughtful friends on the coast between my teeth, and word from dear ones to read, I could sympathize with the boy who used to cut his finger "because it felt so good when it got well!"

Winslow is the lowest point touched by the Santa Fé route in the seven hundred and seventy-six miles from Delhi, Colorado, to Peach Springs, Arizona Territory, except the pueblo of Isleta, which has exactly the same altitude — 4808 feet above the sea. That will give you a fair idea what a great upland the Southwest is. The town is in the valley of the Little Colorado — a slender oasis across the vast surrounding deserts. It is a warm country, and I was glad to have — as I did at leaving — two whole days of walking on bare ground, after over two hundred miles of snow. Luckily it was not in the season of the terrific sandstorms which are so prevalent there, when travel is impossible and trains are blockaded by sand. I find few Easterners who travel out this way have any conception of the

difficulties of operating a transcontinental line. If they had, their foolish grumbling would be less obtrusive. It is one thing to build and operate a railroad one, two, or three hundred miles long in the flat Eastern States, where there is a population at every few miles, where timber, rock-ballast, fuel, water, and cheap labor abound, and where local fares and freights pay expenses and dividends. It is quite another to build and maintain a road some thousands of miles long through one of the bleakest, barest, most inhospitable areas on earth, where there is neither fuel, water, tie-lumber, ballast, nor labor; where it is two hundred to three hundred miles between towns of a hundred people; and where the whole road is made up of grades that would be thought a hard wagon-road in the East. "How slowly we are going!" groans some passenger whose time *may* be worth a dollar a day; "I wonder why it is?" Nothing, much, except that a ninety-ton engine is managing to pull him up a hill at the foot of which one of the puny forty-ton racers of his country would stall. "And what are those funny tanks on flat cars that we pass at every siding?" Not much; they mean only that in this wilderness we have to haul water by the train-load to feed the locomotives and to keep from death the operators and laborers at lonely little stations. The Atlantic and Pacific

Railroad is eight hundred and fifteen miles long. The water it has to haul is equivalent to hauling one of those huge tank-cars of 30,000 gallons of water *six thousand miles a day*, every day in the year! Its service of coal for its own use — exclusive of all the coal-trains taken to the coast as freight — amounts to hauling one car, or twenty tons, of coal *thirty thousand miles a day*, and every day in the year. The country, nine-tenths of the way, gives only sand for a roadbed. Whatever ballast is needed must be quarried and hauled a few hundred miles. If a bridge is swept away or burned, the material for the temporary and the permanent repairs has to come hundreds of miles. The ties and telegraph poles cannot be felled across the track from handy forests, but are transported from one hundred to one thousand miles. The eating-houses are planted amid a land which was meant to feed only its indigenous horned toads and rattlesnakes; and every morsel of the excellent meals comes from Kansas City and Los Angeles.

Winslow was a curious little town, supported entirely by the railroad and distant cattle-ranches. It occurred to me that I had not seen, in any stream since the Arkansaw, such a thing as a dam. Probably none of them were worth it. Nor did I see one from Winslow on clear to the coast. And for that matter, I did not see or hear of a church,

except the Mexican and Indian structures, between Albuquerque and San Bernardino, a distance of over eight hundred miles. I could hardly blame the Baptists from keeping out of so dry a land; but some of the other denominations, which require less water, might have tried it. In most of the "towns" then there were more saloons than dwellings; and sometimes the saloon was the only building in sight except the section-house. Winslow was adorned at my coming with very startling posters, which were also displayed all up and down the Territory. I took home with me several copies, one of which still adorns my scrapbook. It runs: —

—STOP AND READ!—

J. H. BREED

Having returned from Chicago with the largest and

FINEST STOCK OF GOODS

Ever brought into Arizona, is prepared to give the people of

— WINSLOW —

And surrounding country the

DAMNDEST BARGAINS

Ever heard of in this part of the World.

I Carry

A HELL OF A LARGE ASSORTMENT OF GOODS,

Which space will not allow me to enumerate here, but if you will hitch up, and call on the "OLD MAN," you can bet your shirt tail he will treat you right — and sell you anything you may want in his line.

J. H. BREED,
Winslow, A.T.

Shadow and I stayed there three days, resting very hard. Locke was there, too, and was very proud of having fooled a conductor by some piteous tale into bringing him all the way from Manuelito. He left Winslow next day after my arrival, going through to California on a freight train in charge of a carload of cattle; and I afterward learned some curious facts. The cattle had been gathered away south of Winslow, by "rustlers" (stock thieves), who hired my "Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance" to escort the stolen animals to a confederate of theirs in Los Angeles, and gave him a ticket and money therefor. In those days emigrant cars were hauled on freight trains, and among the other passengers on this train was an unworldly old clergyman, with whom the irrepressible Locke became acquainted, and who had a ticket for San Francisco. As the train approached the coast Locke began to fear trouble — the theft of the cattle might be discovered and officers might be waiting for him in Los Angeles. The more he thought the more he disliked the prospect. He began to tell the clergyman sad tales of San Francisco and to paint the attractions of Los Angeles in glowing colors, and at last persuaded the unsuspecting old man to swap tickets and take charge of the cattle from Mojave to Los Angeles. At Mojave they parted, Locke going north to San Francisco

and the minister south to Los Angeles. I can imagine the good man found this the hardest flock to which he ever ministered. At every stop he had to get out and see to his charges, prodding with a long, iron-pointed pole those that had lain down that they might get up before being trampled to death, and superintending their food and water. When the train arrived in Los Angeles a tough-looking fellow with an unorthodox breath stepped up to the clergyman and said: —

"Yo' did —— well, pardner! Didn't nobody ketch on at all? Come over 'n' let's irrigate. Hey? Don't never *drink?* Wal, I'm blankety-blank-blank! Wal, take this, anyhow," and he slipped a twenty-dollar gold-piece into the hand of the puzzled minister, who walked away wondering what it all meant, that people in California were so gratuitous of profanity and double eagles.

XVI

WESTERN ARIZONA

The Devil's Gorge. — Into Snow Again. — The Great Pine Forest and its Game. — A Lucky Revolver-shot. — The King of Black-tails. — A Cañon of the Cliff-Dwellers. — The Greatest Chasm on Earth.

Starting early from Winslow on the third day, rested and feeling very robust save for the pain in my arm, I tramped twenty-seven miles across the smooth, long aclivity of red sandstone dust, starting a few rabbits and finding in the cuts some beautiful veins of satin spar and gypsum. Early evening found me at the brink of one of the characteristic wonders of Arizona — the Cañon Diablo, or "Devil's Gorge." It is a startling thing to ride or walk across those brown plains, level as a floor, and to come suddenly and without warning upon a gigantic split in the earth, a split of dizzy depth and great length. The Cañon Diablo is such a crack over forty miles long. Where the A. & P. railroad crosses it on a wonderful trestle,

the chasm is five hundred and twenty feet wide and two hundred and eighteen feet deep. To appreciate its majesty one must clamber down the terraced cliffs to the bottom and look up, for distance is always minified when we look down upon it. There one finds that the stone abutments, which from above look no larger than a carpenter's "horse," are really forty feet high, and of proportionate base.

My bed that night — and for a majority of the nights thereafter when I slept under a roof at all — was a chair; and with the unceasing pain my dreams were not of the sweetest. In all the rest of the journey until the day before I reached Los Angeles there were but six towns, two of which I passed in the night; and my lodgings were either the bare ground, or a chair tilted back beside the stove of some lone telegraph station, for the bunks in the section-houses were a little too dirty for even so hardened a traveller.

The noble snowy range of the San Francisco peaks, 12,000 feet high, drew nearer as we climbed the steady grade, and there was sure to be trouble in their cold recesses. Six hours, indeed, after passing Cañon Diablo, I met an unpleasant snow-storm, which chilled us the more after the hot sun at Winslow. From that on for over one hundred and fifty miles we were never out of the snow;

and for some days it was very troublesome. All the way across the noble timber belt, eighty miles wide and several hundred north and south, which is such a contrast to most of the treeless plateaus of Arizona, we were wading much of the time knee-deep, but with many interesting things to make us forget these physical discomforts. It is a beautiful area, that great forest of the Flagstaff region — thousands of square miles of natural parks, unspoiled by underbrush, with giant, spar-like pines standing sentinel about the smooth glades of knee-deep grass, rent here and there by terrific cañons, bathed in the clear, exhilarant air of more than six thousand feet above the sea, and full of game. In side-trips off through the forest we came now and then upon all sorts of tracks in the snow — the rounded triangle of the rabbit, the beaten run-way of the lordly black-tailed deer, the pronged radii of the wild turkey, the big, dainty pat-marks of the mountain lion and the smaller ones of the wildcat, the dog-like prints of the coyote and of foxes little and big, and many more. The day after passing the little saw-mill town of Flagstaff brought us glorious sport. The snow was very deep, and I should have taken no extra miles of it, lest I catch cold in the wounded arm; but we could sniff game in the air and who could help hunting? We poked through the drifts for

many fruitless miles, but late in the afternoon came our reward. We climbed a long, wooded hill against the cold wind, and just as we cleared its summit Shadow sprang forward like an arrow, with ringing tongue. There under the steep brow of the bluff, not more than thirty feet away, was a royal buck, the largest black-tail I have ever looked upon. He was already in the air in the first mad plunge for flight, and I am sure my first bullet had sped before he touched the snow again. Bang! bang! bang! till the six-shooter was empty, and before the echo of the last report had ceased to ring through the forest, the antlered monarch sprang doubly high, pitched forward upon the snow, and lay kicking upon his side. Shadow closed in with his usual temerity, and for his pains got a parting kick that sent him twenty feet in a howling sprawl. By the time I could reach the spot the deer was quite dead, and I was greatly elated to find that of my six shots at the flying target, five had taken effect. One ball — probably the last — had passed through the brain from behind one ear to in front of the opposite eye. He was a noble specimen, weighing certainly over two hundred pounds, and with seven spikes on his magnificent antlers. It seemed a bitter shame to leave him there to the wolves and ravens; but we were at least ten miles from the railroad, and there

was no help for it. I carved out several pounds of steaks, wrapped them in a piece of the hide, and stowed the bundle in an accommodating peck pocket of my duck coat. And then those antlers — they *must* go home with me! But "how?" was a perplexing question. My hacks with the hunting-knife upon that skull were very much like stabbing a turtle with a feather. At last I reloaded the six-shooter, stood face to face with my game, and drove bullets through his skull until there was a ring of holes about the horns, and with a little knife-work I got them with their uniting frontlet, afterward shipping them to Los Angeles from the first station.

Eight miles east of Flagstaff, and about four south of the track, among the noble pine timber, a cañon yawns as sudden and as sheer as Cañon Diablo, but far greater. It is a vast, zigzag cleft in the level Mogollon plateau, eighty miles long with its windings, nine hundred feet to the bottom at its deepest point, and from a few hundred feet to half a mile from brink to brink. It is of dark, hard metamorphic rock, and its top is lined with royal pines; while goodly trees in the narrow channel of its dry bed look from above like dark moss. It is, like Cañon Diablo and nearly all hard-rock gorges of the Southwest, of a peculiar terraced formation, so that its cliff-sides seem

flights of gigantic but irregular steps. Here I found my first ruins of the so-called cliff-dwellers, who were, as modern archæology has fully proved, only Pueblo Indians like those among whom I live to-day, and not some extinct race. The houses are very small rooms of stone masonry, built on these narrow shelves of the wild cliff. Many of them are still entire; and in them I dug, from under the dust of centuries, dried and shrunken corn-cobs, bits of pottery, an ancient basket of woven yucca fibre exactly such as is made to-day by the Pueblos of remote, cliff-perched Moqui, and a few arrow-heads and other stone implements. There are many hundreds of these long-forgotten ruins in that grim cañon; and it well repays as long a visit as one can give it.

It was well past midnight when we camped in the snow a little west of Williams, and on the summit of the Arizona Divide, 7345 feet above the sea. There was a pile of new-cut ties, which were soon transformed into a cubby-house, with a "bedstead" of two dry ties; and there we passed the bitter night very cosily, with feet to a roaring fire and stomachs distended with a huge meal of venison roasted in the ashes.

In the rocky fastnesses of Johnson's Cañon, by which the railroad slides down from the shoulders of the great range to lower valleys, we started a

couple of wildcats, and a lucky shot finished one, though I missed a much easier shot at the other. The fur was in prime condition, and I spent three laborious hours skinning the big cat — a job which could never have been accomplished with one hand, had I worn false teeth.

Nearly all day we were in sight of the strange, natural column of stone sixty feet high and no bigger around than a barrel, which towers aloft upon a shoulder of Bill Williams's Mountain, and is called "Bill Williams's Monument." Bill was a famous scout of early days, and died in his cave on the mountain like a gray wolf in his den. The Apaches caged him there, and finally slew the grim old hunter, but not until he had sent thirty-seven of their braves ahead to the happy hunting-grounds.

Down the long, swift slope, from over 7000 feet at Supai to less than five hundred at the Colorado River, we travelled swiftly. The snow lay behind us, the ground was dry, the sun hot, and the strange vegetation of the edge of the great desert was fast unfolding. The days began to grow too warm for comfort, and the nights remained very cold; and this severe range of temperature, characteristic of desert countries, was very trying. The country, too, afforded poorer and poorer foraging, and such meals as we found would have discouraged any but athletic stomachs. As for beds, I

slept in less than half a dozen in the last eight hundred miles.

There was nothing worthy of record in the days to Peach Springs, though none were uninteresting. At that little station on the railroad I stopped to visit the greatest wonder of the world — the Grand Cañon of the Colorado. A twenty-three mile walk north from Peach Springs led us first over a low ridge of dreary gravel hills, and then steeply downward more than three thousand feet, to the bottom of the most stupendous abyss upon which the eye of man has looked. After the first few miles the rough road winds at the bottom of the Peach Springs "Wash," itself a grander cañon than any of Colorado's wonders. From the deep snows of three days before we had descended to the tropics, and found verdure and full-leaved bushes and springing flowers. Birds sang and butterflies hovered past. The wild majestic cliffs loomed taller, nobler, more marvellous, at every step, until the Wash ran abruptly up against a titanic pyramid of roseate rock, and was at an end, and we turned at right angles into the grander cañon of Diamond Creek. The sun was already lost behind the left-hand walls, but the rock domes and pinnacles high above were glorified with the ruddy western glow. For another mile we hurried on, clambering over rocks, pene-

trating dense willow thickets, leaping the swift little brook a score of times — and a long, jarring leap was not the most comfortable thing for me just then. And at last, where the cliffs shrank wider apart, a vast rock wall, 6000 feet in air, stood grimly facing us, and the brook's soft treble was drowned in a deep, hoarse roar that swelled and grew as we climbed the barricade of boulders thrown up by the river against the saucy impact of the brook, and sank in silence beside the Rio Colorado.

I dragged together a great pile of driftwood and built a roaring fire upon the soft, white sand, for there must be no catching cold in that arm. In half an hour I moved the fire, scooped a hollow in the dry and heated sand, rolled our one blanket about Shadow and myself, and raked the sand up about us to the neck. And there we slept, beside the turbid river, whose hoarse growl filled the night, and under the oppressive shadow of the grim cliffs, whose flat tops were more than a mile above our heads.

XVII

THE VERGE OF THE DESERT

Exploring the Grand Cañon. — A Perilous Jump. — The Edge of the Desert. — Kindly Mrs. Kelly. — The Tortures of Thirst. — Shadow goes Mad.

I SHALL not attempt to describe the Grand Cañon of the Colorado, for language cannot touch that utmost wonder of creation. There is but one thing to say: "There it is; go see it for yourself." It is incomparably the greatest abyss on earth — greatest in length, greatest in depth, greatest in capacity, and infinitely the most sublime. Hundreds of miles long, more than a mile deep, so wide that the best hundred-ton cannon ever made could not throw a missile from brink to opposite brink in many places, ribbed with hundreds of side-cañons which would be wonders anywhere else, its matchless walls carved by the eternal river into a myriad towering sculptures — into domes, castles, towers, pinnacles, columns, spires — whose material is here sandstone, there volcanic rock, yon-

der limestone, and again bewildering marble — threaded by the greatest stream in half a continent, which looks a mere steel ribbon at the bottom of that inconceivable gorge, the Grand Cañon of Colorado is that of which there is no such thing as description. Even the present eye cannot fully comprehend it; and one goes away from the dazing view crowded upon with thoughts and feelings which grow and swell within, and become more vivid instead of fainter as time goes by. It is a crying shame that any American who is able to travel at all should fail to see nature's masterpiece upon this planet before he fads abroad to visit scenes that would not make a visible scratch upon its walls.

Before daybreak next morning we were up and climbing one of the rugged terraced walls of a vast butte to get the view from its crest. It was a toilsome and painful climb to me, thanks to the arm, and at the easiest points it is no easy task for any one; but the reward of that groaning, sore, skyward mile lay at the top. From that dizzy lookout I could see a hundred miles of the stupendous workshop of the Colorado — that ineffable wilderness of flat-topped buttes threaded by the windings of the vast cleft.

The descent was ten times worse than the ascent — more difficult, more dangerous, and more pain-

ful. Once I backed over a little ledge, and reaching down my foot found nothing below. A startled glance over my shoulder showed a narrow cleft fifty feet deep just below me! I had not seen it in my look from farther along the ledge, whence only the shelf which the gully split was visible. It was a trying situation. I was too tired to do the old college-day trick of "chinning" by one hand, and besides, that hand had a very different hold from a smooth horizontal bar or flying ring. The cleft was seven or eight feet wide, and about ten feet below me. I saw with the first trial that there was no getting back to the top of my ledge. My right arm was almost at full length to hold by the edge, and my feet were in a horizontal crack which admitted them two or three inches into the cliff. It required the utmost caution to keep my slung left arm from being squeezed against the rock, and such a squeeze would have made me faint with agony and fall. There were but two courses, — to try to jump so as to land on the side of the cleft, or to hang on till exhausted, and then drop to sure death. It did not take long to choose or decide upon the necessary precautions. It was a very doubtful undertaking, — to spring backward and sidewise from such a foothold, fall ten feet, and gain four laterally. The edge of the cleft was nearer my right hand by several feet, but I could

not jump to the right, as you may readily see by placing yourself in a similar attitude, because that clinging arm was in the way. I was tired, more with pain than with exertion, and needed every bit of strength and agility for that supreme effort. I shifted my feet into an easier position, loosened my hand clutch for a moment, and even hung my upper teeth upon a point of rock to ease my legs a few pounds. For a moment so, and then with a desperate breath I thrust my whole life into a frantic effort, and sprang backwards out into the air.

If the Colorado Cañon ran all its seven hundred miles through cliffs of solid gold, I would not make that jump again for the whole of it; but now that it is all over, I am glad to have done it, for the sake of the experience, just as I am glad of a great many other things which were unspeakably fearful in their time. It was a well-judged jump, and it needed my best. I landed upon my back on the outer edge of the shelf, whence a push would have rolled me half a mile, unless one of those vicious-pointed jags below had stopped me long enough to cut me in twain, and with my feet hanging over the brink of the cleft. Shadow had found an easy way, and joined me in a moment. Of course the heavy fall was unspeakable torture to the broken arm, and for some hours I lay there sick and faint

in the blistering sun before there was strength in me to continue the descent. You may be very sure that I backed over no more ledges without a full knowledge of how the bottom was to be reached, and that it was a great relief to stand again in the fantastic wash of Diamond Creek.

When we had done so much exploring as was possible in my crippled condition, and on the short rations I had been able to bring, we started back to Peach Springs, and arrived after a tiresome but uneventful walk, marked only by Shadow's first introduction to a rattlesnake. In all our trip together it had been weather too wintry for the snakes to emerge from their holes; but in this tropical valley we found a very large one that day. Shadow's fearlessness in "tackling" any and all foes had been sheer impudent ignorance, and I was glad to find that there was one creature which he instinctively feared. His whole back was a-bristle, and his growls were fairly startling in their unaccustomed intensity; but he could not be persuaded to come near that ugly coil even when the snake was killed.

From Peach Springs onward the desert began to assert itself more and more, with rare little oases which only helped to emphasize the crowding barrenness. In a little cañon not far west of Peach Springs I saw the first running water visi-

ble from the railroad in a good deal more than two hundred miles; and it was only a wee trickle that died upon its sandy bed within a mile of the spring. Near it, too, but farther down the same wash, whose underground flow was raised by a windmill, was a little patch of cabbage, the first green thing I had seen in six hundred miles, except the sombre needles of pine and juniper. Outside the few and far-parted shanty towns there were now no houses. The section-houses and stations were merely box-cars, with rude bunks and tables, wretched and comfortless, and none too clean.

Along here we became acquainted with a race of filthy and unpleasant Indians, who were in world-wide contrast with the admirable Pueblos of New Mexico. These unattractive aborigines, ragged, unwashed, vile, and repulsive-faced, were the Hualapais (pronounced Wholl-ah-pie), a distant offshoot of the far-superior Apaches. They were once very warlike, but since they were thrashed into submission by the noblest and greatest of Indian fighters, and the most shamefully maligned, General George Crook, they have fallen into harmlessness and worthlessness. They manufacture nothing characteristic, as do nearly all other aborigines, and are of very little interest. Their shabby huts of sticks, gunnysacks, and tins

are visible here and there along the railroad, and their unprepossessing faces are always to be found at the stations.

After a brief pause at the then twenty-house metropolis of Hackberry to inspect its low-grade copper mines, we made the end of a thirty-six-mile walk at Hualapai, another box-car section-house, and one of which I shall always cherish pleasant memories. A big, savage white dog flew out at Shadow with inhospitable bark, and the outlook was not wholly encouraging. But a little, thin-faced Irish woman drove off Shadow's assailant and bade me enter. Could I get something to eat, and sleep beside the stove (for I had had to ship my blanket home, since it was too much of a burden through the midday heat, and with the broken arm; and the nights were cold), and do a little writing at the table? Of course I could, and she bustled around to get me supper.

"An' phat's the mather wid dhe arrum?" she asked kindly, noticing the sling; and when I told her the tears started in her tired blue eyes.

"Och! The poor lad! The poor brave lad! Out in this wicked counthry wid a broken arrum!" And she ran to bring me a pie meant for the men's supper, and other section-house delicacies, bound to soothe my hunger if she could not mend my bones. After a generous supper she went to the other car

and dragged in her own mattress and quilts and made me a luxurious bed on the floor, despite my protests. In the morning she firmly refused the customary payment. In vain I told her I had plenty of money and could not be content to impose upon her. She only said over and over: "No, it's not meself 'll tek the firsht nickel from yees, poor lad. Ye'll need it, or ever ye get out av this sad place."

Two years later, on a visit to New Mexico, I came late at night to the lone section-house of Cubero and slept on the floor till morning. At breakfast I noticed something familiar about the face of the little old woman, but could not "place" her until I had gone half a mile. Then her tall old husband and her bright sons were astonished to see the stranger fly back to the house, throw his arms about little Mrs. Kelly, and give her a sounding smack on her withered cheek! She was even more dumfounded than they, until I said: "So you don't remember the 'poor lad' with a greyhound and a broken arm that slept on the best mattress at Hualapai, and left no pie for Kelly's supper?" And then there was great laughing and chattering, and a few stealthy tears. I was just learning photography, and the miserable picture I made then and there of warm-hearted Mrs. Kelly and all is one of my pet mementoes. The desert

does not share the general broad hospitality of the West; and the night at Hualapai was one of the few oases in my memories of half a thousand miles.

At hardly any of the stations through that vast stretch of country is there any water. In a few cases there are springs within a few leagues which can be piped to the track, but in most places the supply comes many scores of miles in trains of huge tank-cars, and is delivered into barrels half buried beside the track.

Below Kingman we got our first glimpse of that tree of tatters which was ever after to have for me a tragic association — the yucca palm. They were here small and scrubby specimens, much less than the yuccas along the Mojave River, and not at all to be compared to the huge yuccas of Old Mexico. Thirst began to torment us most seriously, too — it had long been troublesome; now it was agonizing. Crippled as I was, and burdened with revolvers, cartridge-belt, writing materials, and everything essential — for I could buy nothing but wretched food in a hundred miles at a time — it was impossible to carry a canteen; and the most I could afford was a quart bottle of water as a day's rations for Shadow and myself. He had to have much the larger share, which he drank greedily from my sombrero; and there was not enough to

keep either of us from severe suffering in trudging thirty to forty miles a day in that fearful sun. Had it not been for hunter experience, which made me never touch a drop of water before noon, no matter how choked, and to keep my salivary glands awake by a smooth quartz pebble under my tongue, I do not know what would have become of me. As it was, more than once we came at night to a station with tongues swollen dry and rough as files projecting beyond our cracked lips, and the first drink brought a spasm of pain. Despite the heat Shadow had been indefatigable in his pursuit of rabbits. I was averaging over thirty-five miles a day in my haste to get across that forbidding land and to meet a sudden need for my presence in Los Angeles, and Shadow, I believe, must have travelled at least three miles to my two.

But now it had begun to tell on him, and he ran no more, but dangled wistfully at my heels, and would not eat. At Yucca, after a fearful day, we found only a miserable shanty of shakes, almost as open as a rail fence. There was no covering to be had for love or money, and the drip from the water tank made two-foot icicles that night. At last I found a torn and dirty gunny-sack — and that was our bed. As usual now in these wretched nights, Shadow and I lay spoon-fashion, huddled close to keep from freezing. That night he was strangely

uneasy and groaned and growled and twisted in his sleep, but I thought nothing of it. Next morning, when we had travelled some four miles down the track, he suddenly turned and fled back to Yucca. Utterly dumfounded at this desertion by the faithful dog who had always seemed haunted by a fear that he might lose me, and who would even spring from his nap if I changed my seat in a room and refuse to lie down again until he had been caressed and convinced that I was not going to escape, I trudged back the suffering miles to Yucca. He was lying in the shade of the tank, and growled hoarsely as I approached. I put a strap around his neck and led him away. He followed peaceably, and in a couple of miles I had forgotten my wonderment and was busy with other thoughts. And on a sudden, as I strode carelessly along, there came a snarl so unearthly, so savage, so unlike any other sound I ever heard, that it froze my blood; and there within six inches of my throat was a wide, frothy mouth with sunlit fangs more fearful than a rattlesnake's! *Shadow was mad!*

XVIII

THE WORST OF IT

A Fight for Life. — Shadow's Grave. — The Heart of the Desert. — The Story the Skull told me.

If I had never "wasted" time in learning to box and wrestle there would have been an end of me. But the trained muscles awaited no conscious telegram from the brain, but acted on their own motion as swiftly and as rightly as the eye protects itself against a sudden blow. Ducking back my head, I threw the whole force and weight of legs, arm, and body into a tremendous kick and a simultaneous wild thrust upon the leading-strap. My foot caught Shadow glancingly on the chest and he went rolling down the thirty-foot embankment. But he was upon his feet again in an instant and sprang wolfishly toward me. I snatched at the heavy six-shooter, but it had worked around to the middle of my back, and was hampered by the heavy-pocketed, long duck coat. Before it was even loosened in its scabbard, the dog was within six feet. I sprang to

the edge of the bank, and threw all my force into a kick for life. It caught him squarely under the chin, and rolled him again violently to the bottom. Up and back he came, like the rebound of a rubber ball, and just as he was within four feet I wrested the Colt loose, "threw it down" with the swift instinctive aim of long practice, and pulled the trigger even as the muzzle fell. The wild tongue of flame burnt his very face, and he dropped. But in an instant he was up again and fled shrieking across the barren plain. The heavy ball had creased his skull and buried itself in his flank. I knew the horrors of a gunshot wound; my poor chum should never go to die by inches the hideous death of the desert. A great wave of love swept through me and drowned my horror. I had tried to kill him to save myself, now I must kill him to save him from the most inconceivable of agonies. My trembling nerves froze to steel; I must not miss! I would not! I dropped on one knee, caught his course, calculated his speed, and the spiteful crack of the six-shooter smote again upon the torpid air. He was a full hundred and fifty yards away, flying like the wind, when the merciful lead outstripped and caught him and threw him in a wild somersault of his own momentum. He never kicked or moved, but lay there in a limp, black tangle, motionless forever.

Weak and faint and heavy-hearted, I dug with my hunting-knife a little grave beneath a tattered yucca and laid the poor clay tenderly therein, and drew over it a coverlet of burning sand, and piled rough lava fragments on it to cheat the prowling coyote, and "blazed" the tattered tree. There I left poor Shadow to his last long sleep, and went alone down the bitter desert.

The country was fast turning more infinitely desolate. Wider and wider were the reaches of molten sand, whose alkaline clouds swept in gusts up the valley, choking and stinging throat and eyes and nostrils. Then I came down into the green valley of the Colorado, where were little ponds and waving grasses and willow thickets and little brush rancherias of the Mojave Indians. Swarthy women were washing at the little pools; and in a larger pond, left by the river in high water, several Mojave men were fishing in an odd fashion. Three of them had each a huge osier basket, canoe-shaped, ten feet long and three feet wide. These they submerged in the water, while three other Indians splashed greatly with long poles. When the fishers lifted their basket-nets, each had a lot of silvery, smelt-like fish; and these they tossed deftly into deep creels slung to their backs.

They are a curious and physically admirable race, these Mojaves — tall and lithe and matchless

runners for a day or two at a pull; superb swimmers, full of strange customs, but sadly degenerate in morals. In warm weather — and it is hardly ever cold in their tropic valley — the men wear only a breech-clout, and the women a single garment generally made of flaming bandannas bought in the piece. They dress their long hair in curious ropes, and plaster the scalp with mud, tattoo the chin in wild patterns, and have no ornaments save fichus, which they make with great skill from tiny glass beads. They have been practising cremation from time immemorial, and were just having a funeral near East Bridge. The corpse, dressed in its best, was stretched on top of a huge pile of dry old ties from the railroad, and the chief mourner touched a torch to the heap of dry brush at the bottom. As the flames sprang aloft and hissed and roared, the mourners stood in a gloomy ring, chanting a wild refrain ; and as the savage fire and savage song went on, they threw upon the pyre from time to time all the earthly possessions of the deceased, and one by one their own garments and ornaments.

Passing the strange, jagged spires of peaks, which are called the Needles because two of them have natural eyelets, — though these are visible only from the cañon, and not from the railroad, — I crossed the 1300-foot drawbridge, now abandoned for a fine new cantilever, a dozen miles below, and

stood upon the there forbidding soil of California. A night at the rather pretty little railroad town of Needles, and I started off again into the grim Mojave Desert. It was the beginning of two hundred miles whose sufferings far outweighed all that had gone before. There were five telegraph stations in that awful stretch, and the largest town in one hundred and sixty miles had three houses. There were not even section-men at the rare stations — only a telegraph operator and a track-walker. They had little to eat for themselves and could seldom spare me anything. My board was the daily quart of water and a cake of chocolate — which contains more nutriment in the same bulk than anything else available, and which was all I could carry. By night I covered myself with sand or slept in a wooden chair beside the stove of a little telegraph office, getting up a dozen times to replenish the fire, and sorely missing my absent blanket. By day I trudged on through the blinding glow, suffering unspeakably from thirst and a good deal still from the broken bone, which was now rapidly knitting. The glare of that desert sun was murderous, and still worse the reflection from the molten sands, which the eye could not escape. At last I took to walking nights, since there was a full moon, and trying — but with scant success — to sleep by day. Starting out from the

little bunk-house of Amboy at sunset, I left behind the beloved low shoes which I had worn 3300 miles, and had just changed for the night because they leaked sand so badly. I travelled twenty miles before missing them from my belt, and made every effort to recover them. But there was no telegraph station; and before my letter reached him the track-walker had burned them up, and so I lost two real friends.

That night, to make a short cut, I tramped through a long, low range of the peculiar hills of the desert. As I trudged along over the white, bare sand, or the areas of black, volcanic pebbles, the moonlight gleam on some peculiar object drew me over a few hundred feet to the right of my pathless course. As I came nearer and nearer, a thrill of awe ran through me, for the strange object slowly took shape to my eyes — a shape hideously suggestive in this desolate spot. As I knelt on the barren sands and lifted that bleached and flinty skull, or looked around at the bones which had once belonged to the same frame, now wide-scattered by the snarling coyote, there rose before my eye the tragedy of that Golgotha, vivid as day.

I saw the summer glare of the merciless desert, the sun like fire overhead, the sand like molten lead below; the slow ox-teams of a little band of immigrants toiling in agony across that plain of

death, whose drivers, crazed by the fierce smiting of the sun reeled stumblingly along, their cracked tongues unable even to curse; while the great, patient oxen, lifting their feet from the blistering soil, shook them and bawled piteously. I saw the gaunt faces as the blood-warm water in the kegs fell lower and lower, till one desperate man set out to seek for water among the nearest mountains. I saw him turn his back resolutely to the caravan and push bravely toward the desolate, rocky, treeless hills, while sun and sand grew yet more fearful in their white glow; and the strong breeze in his face brought no life, but was as the breath of a fiery furnace. I saw him plod on through the cañons drifted high with sand; over sharp, rocky spurs and down desolate defiles where the feet of coyotes for thousands of years have worn deep pathways in the limestone floor; tearing up with trembling hands the sands of some mountain arroyo, only to find them still parched and burning, deep as his arm could reach. He struggled on for weary miles, gasping, burning, failing in strength and courage, until nature could no more, and he sank exhausted upon the bare ground, half swooning and half delirious. But the demon of thirst soon dragged him to his feet again, and bade him return to the wagons; and he started back. But blinded eyes and shrivelling brain were treach-

erous guides, and he wandered farther and farther from salvation, until at last the knowledge that he was lost seared itself upon his mind. That sobered him, and with desperate coolness he tried to get his bearings. But it was too late. . . .

Next day the lying mirage nearly fooled me to a like end. I had camped, unable to reach a station, my water was gone, and all day I had been half dead with thirst. And down in yonder seething valley I saw a broad, blue lake, its very ripples visible as they danced in the westering sun. It was as hard an effort of the will as I ever made not to rush down the long, gentle slope and throw myself into that azure paradise and soak and drink —but I knew there was no water there, simply because so large a lake does not exist in the desert; and that even if it were water it would be poison, since there was neither inlet nor outlet to that bowl of a valley. And so with tottering legs, and blear eyes that dared not look back, and cracked lips and tongue, I ran away until out of sight behind a friendly ridge; and after two fearful hours fell exhausted under a tank by the railroad.

On over the sandy, volcanic wastes, past the barren, contorted ranges of savage ruggedness and wonderful color, I trudged rapidly as possible; and still neither too hurried nor too beset with discomfort to extract a great deal of interest and infor-

mation from every cruel day. This is a country of strange things; but none stranger than the appearance of its mountains. They are the barest, barrenest, most inhospitable-looking peaks in the whole world; and they are as uncordial as they look. Many a good man has left his bones to bleach beside their cliffs or in their death-trap valleys. They are peculiar in the abrupt fashion in which they rise from the plain, and more so in their utter destitution of vegetable life in any form. But strangest of all is their color. The prevailing hue is a soft, dark, red brown, or occasionally a tender purple; but here and there upon this deep background are curious light patches, where the fine sand of the desert has been whirled aloft and swept along by the mighty winds so common there, and rained down upon the mountain slopes where it forms deposits scores of feet in depth, and acres in extent. The rock bases of the mountains are completely buried in gentle acclivities of sand, while the cream or fawn-colored patches are often to be seen many hundreds of feet above the surrounding level. These mountains are not very high — none, I should judge, over 5000 or 6000 feet — but very vigorous in outline, and, at certain stages of the daylight, very beautiful in color. Nearly all, too, are rich in mineral, and will pay if the water problem is ever solved — as it is not too likely to be.

XIX

ON THE HOME STRETCH

A Desert Cut-Off. — The One Good Chum. — Plucky Munier. — Days of Horror. — Into "God's Country" at Last.

Getting to Daggett, the station for the rich silver-mining camp of Calico, about midday, I took a brief rest and then turned southward. Here I was to leave the railroad for good, and strike out across the desert and over the ranges to "God's country" on the other side. The California Southern Railway, by which the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad now runs to Los Angeles, was not yet built; and this cut-off on foot was a serious matter. Just as I was starting off, I found a new companion who was poor and ragged, but infinitely more of a man than those who had shared — and half spoiled — short stretches earlier in the tramp. He was a young French Canadian named Albert Munier; had come to the mining camp of Calico, and been fleeced by his absconding employer; and now, penniless and ragged, wished to get to Los Angeles.

Would I mind if he walked with me? There was a pleasant frankness in his face; and I promptly said "Come on!"

Neither of us will be likely to forget that afternoon, the most awful of all my journey. We missed the trail, and for six anguished hours staggered through the heavy sand, over fiery hills and down hollows that were like a furnace. I had thought I knew thirst before; but it was never understood until that afternoon. A score of times I thought we must fall and die there, and only mulish will kept us up. The blood-warm water from his canteen and my beer-bottle — for I had long ago to discard my ponderous canteen — seemed to have no effect whatever. The only relief we found was when we built a hot fire of the roots of the greasewood, and over its malodorous ashes made chocolate in a tomato-can Munier had brought along. The sand was ankle-deep, and flung the ghastly heat back in our faces with blinding power.

For the last five miles I had to help poor Munier along by the arm. And just at sunset we came, more dead than alive, to Stoddard's Wells, the only water in fifty miles. There was a little flow of water from a tunnel in the hill, and a miserable "house" of split shakes, inhabited by the two only absolute curs I met in the nearly five months.

They would not let us sleep in the house, though I offered a handful of silver for the use of a battered chair beside the fire, for my arm showed bad symptoms that day, and I dared not catch cold in it. They said they did not keep a house for tramps, and when I showed them a pocketful of credentials, waved them aside, vowing they could not read, which was a lie. They ordered us out of the house, and stood in the door berating us in the vilest language. Our blood boiled, but we could not even take the old savage satisfaction of thrashing them, for they were wretched, hacking consumptives, come here to stave off death, and even a cripple could not strike them.

A grim night we passed by our little camp-fire of greasewood twigs — 4000 feet above the sea, and chilled by a fierce wind from off the snow peaks of the Sierra Madre. I was worn out, for my day's walk had been forty miles, — eighteen before Munier joined me at Daggett, — and miles of great suffering, but I dared not go to sleep. At last weariness overcame me, and I dropped off. When I woke Munier was sitting and shivering by the little fire, and feeding it with weeds, while I was warmly wrapped in his huge old ulster! The unselfish fellow had gone cold himself to save me from a chill that he knew would be dangerous.

The next day's equally painful tramp was mostly

down hill, but even more torrid as we came to lower altitudes. Never was there so blessed a sight as when, at last, we looked down from the top of a high ridge, which has since been discovered to be a mountain of pure marble, to a green ribbon of a valley, two hundred yards wide, with noble cotton-woods, and a broad, clear, shallow river, the Mojave. We stopped at a pleasant little ranch, where gray-headed Rogers had his 2000 snowy-fleeced Angora goats, and next day, crossing the river where the little railroad town of Victor has since been built, plodded up the long, sandy slope toward the noble range which shuts off the grimmest of deserts from the Eden of the world. It was another hard day, but now there was the scant shade of junipers and thirty-foot yucca palms under which to rest. Poor Munier was suffering terribly. He pulled off his shoes and showed me his roasted feet, which were actually covered, above and below, with blisters large as a half-dollar. But his pluck was splendid, and he struggled on, smothering his groans, joking as best he could, and never grumbling.

Up the long, smooth slope we came with the afternoon, paused on the brink of the sudden "jumping-off place," and plunged down into the steep depths of the strange Cajon (box pass, pronounced Cah-*hone*) Pass. A few miles of barren

gullies and ridges, and we came to a little house beside a tender green where the sands of the arroyo thanked a tiny spring. And here poor Munier fell, unable to move another step. I made arrangements at the house for him, gave him half my dwindling money; and with a hearty and regretful hand-clasp left the brave fellow and hurried on down the cañon.

Soon a wee thread of water trickled along the wet sand, caressing grateful blades of grass; and it grew in volume and in voice as we sped side by side down the deepening gorge. I began to cross musical brooklets, that flashed down the cañon's walls to the central stream. The deep-green manzanito bushes, with their red-satin bark and their tiny peduncles of snow-white blossoms, were all about; and the soft night wind that drifted up the Pass seemed fraught with the odors of Araby the blest. Then came the Toll-Gate, a lovely little villa framed in orchards, and with a trout-pond under its big cotton-woods; and I broke into song at this forerunner of the new Eden.

In the soft, sweet evening I came to the first fence I had seen in five hundred miles, and an orchard in fragrant bloom of peach and apricot, and to the hospitable little farmhouse that used to be "Vincent's." Ah, such luxury! When kindly Mrs. Vincent knew me, she spread such a supper as

my long-abused stomach had lost all memory of; and for that I had had no fruit in so long, she gave me in sumptuous array about my plate fourteen kinds of delicious home-made preserves! That night, for the first time since breaking my arm, I was able to get off all my clothing, and revel in a glorious bath and a spotless bed.

Next day I trotted gayly down the cañon, climbed over the western wall, and struck out along the foothills. Now I was truly in "God's country" — the real Southern California, which is peerless.

It was the last day of January. The ground was carpeted with myriad wild flowers, birds filled the air with song, and clouds of butterflies fluttered past me. I waded clear, icy trout brooks, startled innumerable flocks of quail, and ate fruit from the gold-laden trees of the first orange orchards I had ever seen. Pretty Pomona gave me pleasant lodgings that night, and next day, February 1, 1885, a thirty-mile walk through beautiful towns, past the picturesque old Mission of San Gabriel, and down a matchless valley, brought me at midnight to my unknown home in the City of the Angels.

When I pulled off my shoes from tired feet that night, I had walked since leaving Cincinnati in my roundabout course a fraction over 3507 miles. I had been out one hundred and forty-three days, and had crossed eight States and Territories,

nearly all of them along their greatest length. My arm had knitted perfectly, and in a few days more was out of its bandages. It was a good job of amateur surgery, and is fully as straight and as strong as its mate. The longest and happiest "tramp" ever made for pure pleasure was over; and at nine o'clock next morning I was in the harness, as city editor of the Los Angeles *Daily Times*.

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